The Dissertation Committee for Adolfo Rafael Mora Certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

SEEING COLOR AND TELEVISION:

WHAT DO MILLENNIALS' TELEVISION PRACTICES TELL US ABOUT POST-RACIALITY?

Committee:

Joseph D. Straubhaar, Supervisor

Mary C. Beltrán

Wenhong Chen

Kevin Cokley

Viviana del Carmen Rojas

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by

Adolfo Rafael Mora

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Dedication

Para mi pequeña familia, both the nuclear and fictive one!

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Adolfo Rafael Mora, Ph.D.

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Supervisor: Joseph D. Straubhaar

The demographic composition of Millennials is the most ethnoracially diverse generation so far, and with it, a discursive construction of them being colorblind. Colorblindness is also taken as reality with cultural texts that feature color, therefore one-step closer of achieving a post-racial society: a socio-cultural environment where race and racism are no longer limiting factors. This dissertation was interested in examining the relationship between orientations of seeing color and the television practices of Millennials. To do so, two grand research questions were answered using survey methodology: One paid close attention to color-blindness while the other focused on color-consciousness.

The first research question was interested in the socializing effect of television on two color-blind attitudes: color-evasion and power-evasion. On one hand, it analyzed television programming that featured various types of color diversity: multicultural (heterogeneous in color), minority leading (homogeneous in color, favoring ethnoracial

minorities), and White-dominant (homogeneous in color, favoring the ethnoracial majority). On the other, it also analyzed respectable portrayals—representations embodying the values of mainstream culture—for four ethnoracial groups: Whites, Latin@s, Blacks, and Asians. Statistical results ($N = 535$) show that these predictors had no statistical significance on color-evasive but did for power-evasive racial blindness.

The second research question was interested in how being color-conscious across two orientations (color-awareness and power-awareness) predicted noticing the perceived sexuality, criminality, and secondary narrative treatment of ethnoracial groups on television – conceptualized as onscreen marginality. Statistical results suggest that power-awareness is more successful in predicting onscreen marginality and in manners consistent with its framework than its counterpart orientation.

Both research questions examined opposite and competing ideologies of seeing color, and their findings offer support to think of Millennials as a colorblind generation but not exclusively. This dissertation suggests that color-blind texts prompt colorblindness, and when television misrepresents ethnoracial groups, color-consciousness dominates. Eventually, the Millennial generation is still sorting out the contradictions about the place of race(ism) in society, and even if television appears neutral in its inclusion of color, there are subtle differences in how Millennials interpreted ethnoracial groups onscreen.

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INTRODUCTION

The presidential election of Barack Obama in 2008, and his re-election in 2012, popularized and helped engender the image of a post-racial America (Bonilla-Silva, 2016; Cho, 2009; Love & Tosolt, 2010; Squires, 2014). The logic is simple: if a Black man occupied the ultimate political position as president, then racism has ended or is disappearing. The turn to a perceived colorblind society suggests that any ethnoracial group is welcomed into the cultural, economical, and political fabric of the United States, since ethnicity/race do not longer structure social outcomes and opportunities. While Barack Obama works as a cultural signifier for an optimistic time when we moved beyond race(ism), how Americans reacted to his success suggest otherwise (Hollinger, 2011; Love & Tosolt, 2010): that a post-racial America is more of a rhetoric than a reality. Indeed, the Pew Research Center (2016) found that White adults (32%) were more likely to believe that Obama made race relations worse than the general population (25%) or Blacks (5%). American youth (14-24 year olds) were far optimistic about what a Black president meant for race relations in the United States. Close to two-thirds believe that his presidency demonstrated that ethnoracial minority groups have the same opportunities as White people (62%), or believed that race is no longer a barrier for accomplishments (67%) (MTV, 2014). This range of responses questions the validity of a post-racial society, or at the very least, it poses the inquiry: Who is likely to endorse post-racial attitudes, and what cements them?

Other national events additionally weaken the claim of a post-racial America. Most recently, the Black Lives Matter movement and the 2016 U.S. presidential election

are prime examples. Loosely starting with the fatal shooting of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin in Sanford Florida, and formalizing with that of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, the Black Lives Matter movement has sought public and legislative attention as well as sympathy toward the mistreatment of Black bodies at the expense of police brutality and other cultural institutions. President-elect Donald Trump grounded his political campaigns on racialized narratives about fearing the "Other." Through his rhetoric, for example, Latin@s became a faceless ethnoracial group comprised of rapists and murderers; Mexico sent its worst citizens to the United States, and building a wall between the neighboring countries was promoted to contain the "threat." What this small sample of his public discourse captures are some of the anxieties and fears attached to certain ethnoracial groups in dominant culture. These also paint a picture that inter–ethnic/-racial relations in the United States are far from harmonious at the macro-level.

On top of these public sentiments, the noticeable gaps between groups in health, unemployment, education, housing, income, and incarceration rates—which appear to widen over years, not close (Pew Research Center, 2016; State of Black America, 2015)—again discrediting the notion of a color-neutral society. In 2014, the median adjusted household incomes for Whites was $71,200 and $43,300 for Blacks, and in 2015, Blacks (26%) were twice as likely to live in poverty than White people in 2014 (10%) (Pew Research Center, 2016). Among youth aged 18 to 24, Blacks (33%, 22%) and Latin@s (35%, 15%) are less likely than Asians (64%, 63%) or Whites (42%, 41%) to enroll in college or earn a bachelors' degree (Krogstad, 2016). In terms of the incarcerated population, White people are under-represented (39%) according to US

Census figures (64%), while Blacks are over-represented (40%; 13%) (Wagner & Rabuy, 2016).

The ethnoracial inequalities carry over to the symbolic realm of media. Not only are ethnoracial minorities facing adversity in their numeric presence on television—in most cases, their visibility is less than their population figures (Negrón-Muntaner et Abbas, Figueroa, & Robson, 2014; Tukachinsky, Mastro, & Yarchi, 2015)—but also in their media depictions are also contradictory. News reports cover the hate crimes committed against ethnoracial minorities, and simultaneously, the same medium frames them as law-less or undocumented citizens, government-dependent, or here to over-populate and drain the country's resources (Campbell, 2016; Chavez, 2008). Fictional media communicates similar narratives and roles. Latin@s are typically depicted as gardeners or maids (Negrón-Muntaner *et al*., 2014). Blacks are sassy and physically or sexually aggressive (Bounds Littlefield, 2008). Asians are weird, cool, or quiet (Larson, 2006).

Colorblind narratives in entertainment media add more contradictions to the already and ambivalent depictions of ethnoracial groups existing onscreen. What people see onscreen is ethnoracial minorities sharing screen time, with their stories interlocked alongside White characters; both groups interact in conflict-free households or workplaces and sometimes form coalitions; people can marry across cultures and befriend anyone without much setback. These harmonious inter-racial relations offer audiences symbolic proof that post-racial society is materializing (Brook, 2009; Esposito, 2009; Squires, 2014). However, the tradeoff for this ethnoracial pluralism to exist

onscreen is that characters must sanitize and de-politicize their ethnic and/or racial identities (Beltrán, 2010b, 2013; Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014; Esposito, 2009; Molina-Guzmán, 2010; Squires, 2014). Color[1] must surrender its essence, in other words.

These conflicting images demand more analysis as images and also as media texts which audiences consume. This dissertation attempts to consolidate and analyze the conflicted images, narratives, and myths about color on television, and how the audience receives and responds to them. It does so by interrogating post-raciality—the notion that we are moving beyond race and ethnicity (Hollinger, 2011; Nayak, 2006)—through the reception practices of one of the media muses of post-raciality: the multicultural, Millennial generation. Consequently, the guiding research question that frames this research is: What is post-racial about Millennials' television experience? And, if that experience is not primarily post racial, how should we understand it?

Theoretically, this dissertation is grounded in post-racial theory (post-raciality), which centralizes color-blindness in its framework (Bobo, 2011; Cho, 2009; Powell, 2008). Colorblindness is a growing paradigm in the media, starting from the industry's casting practices (Warner, 2015) to the production of cultural texts that incorporate multiculturalism and raceless aesthetics such as employing ethnoracially ambiguous actors and characters (Beltrán, 2013; Beltrán & Fojas, 2008; Molina-Guzmán, 2013). Post-racial theory helps us understand the conditions in which color is socially and culturally accepted, and what must be done to overcome the bothersome ethnoracial past

[1] Color here stands for race and ethnicity. As it will be explained in Chapter 1, color is able to capture the

that still hunts the United States. Its proposed solution is to minimize color from identity politics (Squires, 2014).

This dissertation is organized into two grand research questions that jointly examine and attempt to explain popular ideologies about color in media/television reception. Both research questions were answered through an online survey carried with large groups of undergraduate students at a large public university in Central Texas and cover a fairly broad cross-section of students. It cannot be described as a random sample, however. The nature of the sample is covered more in Chapters 2 and 3. Following is a description of the organization of the dissertation in terms of chapter content.

Chapter 1 of this dissertation discusses why Millennials are an appropriate age generation to study post-raciality. It explains why color can best explain the presence of ethnicity and race. It also sets the dissertation's main theoretical foundation and differentiates between two competing ideologies about color: color-blindness and color-consciousness. Finally, it builds a case for studying entertainment television in relation to post-race and Millennials. The argument is that both television and Millennials are sorting through contradictions about the state of race and racism today, which results in ambivalent television practices and in Millennials' agreement with the dominant framework in hand. So, when television content is colorblind, they are too, and when it mistreats ethnoracial groups, a color-conscious attitude is present.

Chapter 2 centers on color-blindness directly and examines its relationship to the color-blind screen in terms of audience perceptions and attitudes. It defines color-blind television content in two realms: (1) entertainment programming that features ethnoracial

difference to various degrees (for instance, multicultural TV shows), and (2) exceptional portrayals of color (when ethnoracial groups reflect the values of mainstream culture). This chapter foregrounds the socializing effect of television in contemporary attitudes about race(ism). Study findings in Chapter 2 suggest that colorblind content is likely to influence the colorblind attitudes of Millennials, especially the ones that discredit the existence of ethnoracial inequalities in society.

Chapter 3 pays attention to color-consciousness and examines its relationship to the onscreen marginality of ethnoracial groups. It focuses on three typical television depictions of ethnoracial minorities: (1) criminality, (2) sexuality, and (3) decorative roles. This chapter argues that the long-standing and marginal treatment of ethnoracial minorities on television is difficult to forget, and that audiences in turn continue to assign ethnoracial meanings to color. Study results in Chapter 3 indeed found that the marginality of ethnoracial groups varied according to the social worth assigned in television to their color. On this note, it is proposed that Blacks set the standard by which to assess cases of symbolic ethnoracial inequality and that Asians are treated as honorary Whites.

The last chapter of analysis and conclusions consolidates Chapters 2 and 3. It teases out the tensions inherent in the idea of post-racial media and society, and the manner by which the television practices of Millennials diverge and match this dominant ethnoracial ideology. This chapter examines the conditions by which Millennials act as an active media audience. It also discusses the meanings assigned to the televisual depiction of Whiteness and Blackness in which some individuals claim post-raciality.

Lastly, it suggests future research and addresses the limitations of current research project.

CHAPTER 1. Research Rationale and Theoretical Framework

The inclusion of color on television has been inconsistent across seasons and dependent on the mood of the moment (Gray, 2004). For instance, the 2008-2009 open-network season was particularly pale, with *The Cleveland Show* (2009-2013)—an adult, African-American animated series on FOX—supplying most of its color (Watson & Armstrong, 2008). This level of invisibility for ethnoracial minorities—the *carriers* of color onscreen (hooks, 1992; Shome, 2000)—seems to be norm rather than the exception in scripted and mainstream television. Even since the early days of television, the observance of ethnoracial minorities onscreen has been less than their US Census statistics – a trend that continues today (Tukachinsky, Mastro, & Yarchi, 2015), even in the film industry (Smith, Choueitim & Pieper, 2014, 2016). Seeing color onscreen is perhaps more optimistic at the moment, as there is a noticeable splash of color across broadcast and cable networks as well as streaming sites (Hunt el al., 2015, 2016).

The optimism is not in the numbers that this surge of color on television brings but in the quality of its portrayals. It appears that ethnoracial minorities are able to embrace their social identities onscreen through complex characterizations in television today. This is arguably the case with *Jane the Virgin* (CW, 2014—) for Latin@s, *Empire* (FOX, 2015—) or *Black-ish* (ABC, 2014—) for Blacks, or *Masters of None* (Netflix, 2015—) for South Asians (Ramanathan, 2015). How, then, can we make sense of these celebrated inserts of color on television when ethnoracial minorities are still the common deviant Other onscreen? The answer lies in how people see color and its worth in defining the self and social mobility, and the current societal mood pushes

colorblindness. Through these attitudes, ethnicity and race should only be taken at face value with no hierarchical meaning behind them. So, in the case of color-blind media reception, media depictions of ethnoracial groups should be rendered neutral regardless of their valence, as these part-take in a colorblind symbolic space.

Millennials are caught in the middle of colorblind thinking. They cannot disregard color, as it surrounds them in an ethnoracially diverse generation. Yet, society encourages a mantra of sameness through colorblindness (Bobo, 2011; Hollinger, 2011), which arguably dissuades Millennials from differentiating on the basis of ethnicity and/or race. As will become apparent in the last sections of this chapter, Millennials are still sorting out the ideological contradictions of color in their environments. They see color, but at the same time, they do not want it to structure social and cultural (dis)advantage (MTV, 2014). Such a stance is similar to the conflicting state of ethnicity and race on television: that which incorporates color only to discourage its ethnoracial meanings. This congruence between television and Millennials makes their viewing practices a suitable research subject through which to examine post-raciality.

The goal of this chapter is to situate Millennials vis-à-vis post-raciality. Before discussing where Millennials stand in this ideological camp, we must first clarify some of the concepts and terms used in this dissertation, particularly its usage of color over race and/or ethnicity. Next, post-racial theory is formalized, as well as how media factors in. Then, post-racialism is discussed before shifting the focus shifts to seeing color. Two opposite perspectives are key here: color-blindness and color-consciousness. Lastly, the socio-cultural stance of Millennials is elaborated in terms of their ethnoracial attitudes

and television viewership. The last section argues that Millennials may swing in the direction media points to: whether it is ignoring the significance of ethnorace or recognizing its marginality.

COLOR AS RACE/ETHNICITY AND TELEVISION

Race and ethnicity are separate but associated social identities (Alcoff, 2009; Cokley, 2007; Phinney 1996). Race is often grounded in discourses of the body and the social and cultural meanings inscribed to it. Furthermore, it is an imposed social identity based on heritable, unchangeable, and visible psyciological characteristics that determine group membership. On the other hand, ethnicity is concerned with the politics of cultural belonging and ancestry. It is social identity that is self-chosen and nurtured, and at times, even considered a product of one's socio-cultural environment. Some scholars (e.g., Phinney, 1996) even argue that ethnicity subsumes race, since race can determine ethnic affiliation and affirmation. Yet, despite their conceptual distinction, both constructs are conflated, undifferentiated, and used interchangeably in popular discourse, which makes it hard to untie them. One linguistic and conceptual that attempts to consolidate their embedded and messy dynamic is ethnorace. The term can be useful in describing the troubled histories of ethnic racialization that social groups experience as they integrate into dominant culture (Alcoff, 2009). Ethnorace also recognizes the racial and ethnic diversity within the social group, which tends to be homogenized when either term is used as a means of pan-identity (Alcoff, 2009).

However, this dissertation turns to color to discuss race and ethnicity in the context of television. It does so to parallel the manners by which television reduces race (and to an extension ethnicity) into mostly discernable signifiers that can be decoded through a practice of reading bodies and actions (Bounds Littlefield, 2008; Gorham, 1999; Hall, 2001; Merskin, 2011). On television, color is arguably first experienced through race then (if time allows and characters elaborated) ethnicity because of its visual quality, which facilitates the social identification and categorization of characters. Race has become synonymous with physicality and looks (Alcoff, 2009), and in a medium that stresses visuals, this observable state of race primes mental schemas that single-out ethnoracial groups (Merskin, 2011). Ethnicity enters this visual process of race because the images in television are not just pictorials. These are connected to sounds and movement, which help viewers connect and imagine the body into a given culture and ideology (Bounds Littlefield, 2008; Gorham, 1999). To illustrate, a character can be coded Latin@ if s/he has brown skin, but their ethnoracial identity is further clarified and solidified if s/he speaks Spanish or has an accent. In discussions of television, color has the capacity to capture the interaction of ethnicity and race that encompass the social imagination of ethnoracial groups and the audio and visual elements that establish it.

Color in television becomes evident through a process of visibility. Kaszynski (2016) differentiates between vision, visibility, and visuality as follows:

> Vision is about what is processed via the eyes; visuality is the process of piecing together the relationships between events in the world. Visibility, as a third term, vacillates between vision and visuality, referring either to what can be seen via

> vision or to what can be visualized. Visibility is about the frame of the image and about possibility: whether or not something, or someone, can be seen or imagined in relationship to others (p. 62)

This dissertation adopts the above theorization and relates it to television and color. Televisibility is understood here as the presence or absence of color on television. In other words, in what ways (i.e., representations, images, stereotypes) are ethnoracial groups included/excluded, available, experienced, or noticed onscreen? It attempts to capture the realities of color onscreen. What people derive from the televisuality of color will be referred to as televisuality. Televisuality speaks to what ideologies (i.e., myths, rhetoric, narratives) are found in images (visibility) and imaginations of color (visuality/visualization). In studying the televisibility of color, and how it relates to reception, this dissertation contributes to the televisuality of color, or how ethnoracial groups are given certain socio-cultural meanings.

DEFINING POST-RACE AND POST-RACIALITY

A post-racial society is a socio-cultural environment that has surpassed the conflicts linked to race and ethnicity as well as upended racialized hierarchies and the hegemony of whiteness – an American society that is free from racial preference, discrimination, and prejudice (Bonilla-Silva, 2016; Fritz & Stone, 2009). Under a post-racial society, race and ethnicity no longer define the self, thus cultivating a culture of racelessness (Beltrán, 2005; Little, 2009). For ethnoracial minorities, racelessness is a strategic dissociation, or a psychological and spatial separation from their cultural

community and collective identities, to facilitate assimilation into the dominant culture, ideally making vertical mobility possible in a society that devalues non-dominant groups (Fordham, 1988, 1991). Scholars have argued that a post-racial society calls for racial-amnesia (Jones, 2016), and in return, the painful, controversial, toxic, exhausting, redundant, and taboo conversations about ethnic, racial, and cultural marginalization in the U.S. would dissipate (Squires, 2014). In the case of the United States, it imagines a future (or present) that brushes over its ethnoracially divided past dominated by racial hierarchies and oppression (Bobo, 2011). Simply put, post-race is a pain-free socio-cultural result of overcoming race(ism) and racial structuration (Gallagher, 2003).

A post-racial society promises racial neutrality and objectivity (Hollinger, 2011). The trade off for dismissing race and ethnicity is fairness – a meritocratic social world where a populace and its institutions practice equality and impartiality. Said differently, race-blind egalitarianism defines post-race. Solidarities and collectives can still be built under a post-racial society but only through social and superordinate identities (e.g., nationalism, religion, humanity) that align with the interest of the nation-state as a whole (Squires, 2014). Idiosyncrasies should still be the main way others are evaluated and acknowledged, not their memberships to racial and ethnic entities. By enforcing personal and universal identities, a post-racial society achieves socio-cultural parity.

One must not ignore contributing the role of media in cementing notions of post-raciality. Squires (2014) found that the adjective post-race went from obscurity in news media during the 1990s to a media buzzword in mid-2000s. The news utilized post-race to describe it as a distant, anti-discriminatory future thanks to the introduction *racial*

politics brought by ethnoracial minorities, plus multiculturalism was inevitable due to surging immigration and racial mixing. Current news media still framed post-race with the same rhetoric of the 1990s. The politics of Barack Obama and interracial families were common themes in news stories following his nomination to US president in 2008. The number of text mentions of post-race steadily grew from 11 in 2005, to 72 in 2007, and to a staggering sum of 1,475 by 2008. Between 2008 and 2009, a tone shift occurred in using post-race. Optimism dominated news editorials in 2008, while pessimism reigned in 2009. The realities of structural racism (e.g., ethno-racial discrepancies in employment, education, housing in the favor of whites), the unkept promises of Obama, and the framing of right-wing politicians as saviors were signs that America was prematurely considered post-racial.

The media additionally romanticizes multiculturalism onscreen by propagating an egalitarian utopia where ethnoracial difference exists harmoniously (Beltrán 2010a; Squires, 2014; Turner, 2014). This mediated version of ethnoracial diversity borrows from color-blindness to cement a post-racial narrative. One based on conflict-free social interactions, which is possible through de-politicized racial, ethnic, or even cultural identities. What this means is that *color* is welcomed as simply color – an aesthetic, something that can visualize/envision difference. Scholars (Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014; Beltrán, 2010b) caution media audiences to not just accept and praise the commercial inclusion of ethnoracial difference in media and instead to exercise a vigilant and critical outlook. One should question, for instance, the narrative conditions in which ethnic and racial groups are symbolically included. Through this critical reflection, people can

identify whose perspectives are privileged, and what kind or ethnoracial messages are conveyed. Even if we *see* ethnoracial groups co-existing onscreen, whether in the same narrative or not, what is being consumed is an empty color diversity that falsely epitomizes ethnoracial progress for media audiences. When these narratives and depictions are examined closely, they offer no real solution in solving race and racism besides befriending/marrying people with different ethnoracial backgrounds from ours. When ethnoracial groups extend their social and familial circles, they are taken as bridges, and if ethnoracial minorities commit these acts, they are taken as model minorities (Squires, 2014). How, then, are interpersonal relationships meant to dissolve social inequalities? This is the question that media tends to leave unanswered.

Squires (2014) argues that media in a post-racial era promotes a racial citizenship that tells audiences how to *do* race (p. 167). She argues that this mediated teaching of doing race is based on neo-colorblindness that ignores the interests of ethnoracial minorities. Citizens, under a post-racial mandate, are encouraged to denounce ethnic and racial categories, and opt for color-blind remedies that build social and cultural solidarities such as focusing on common and super-ordinate social identities like religion or nationalism. Citizens are also expected to recreate ethnicity/race through market consumption practices. This includes watching television that features color prominently such as shows mostly comprised of ethnoracial minority actors/characters or rainbow casts/characters. Other expectations are in the interpersonal domain, which stress friending/wedding outside one's ethnoracial in-group.

Post-race has been also elaborated into a theoretical framework – post-raciality (Ikuenobe, 2013; Nayak, 2006; Sanada, 2012). Its major tenant is color-blindness (Bobo, 2011; Cho, 2009), which could simply be understood as perception that eliminates ethnorace from the equation of social inequalities and social competence (Manning, Hartmann, & Gerteis, 2015). Color-blindness is the current got-to (and the most normative) attitude for solving the anxieties and fears induced by race/ethnicity (Neville *et al*., 2013). Endorsing colorblindness means that race/ethnicity are unnecessary, insignificant, or secondary to move forward in society. The field of psychology identifies two domains of color-blindness: color-evasion (an interpersonal mantra of sameness) and power-evasion (an outlook dismissing ethnorace from defining outcomes).

Color-consciousness opposes color-blindness and by extension post-racialism. It recognizes that ethnorace determines social and cultural opportunities and that ethnicity and/or race are key elements in our identity politics (Bell, 2016). Similar to color-blindness, color-conscious has two domains, which stand in direct opposition to those of colorblindness: color-awareness (an interpersonal mantra of distinguishing ethnoracial groups) and power-awareness (a critical outlook that stresses the importance of ethnicity/race in defining outcomes).

Color-blindness and color-consciousness are pictured in the figure below, alongside their two sub-dimensions, or shades as Doane (2014) would argue. The figure is meant to depict the contradictory nature between these two competing ethnoracial ideologies, and how post-race fits into the picture. It is a way of summarizing the

conceptual framework guiding this dissertation. Both ethnoracial ideologies are discussed in more detail following the discussion on post-racialism.

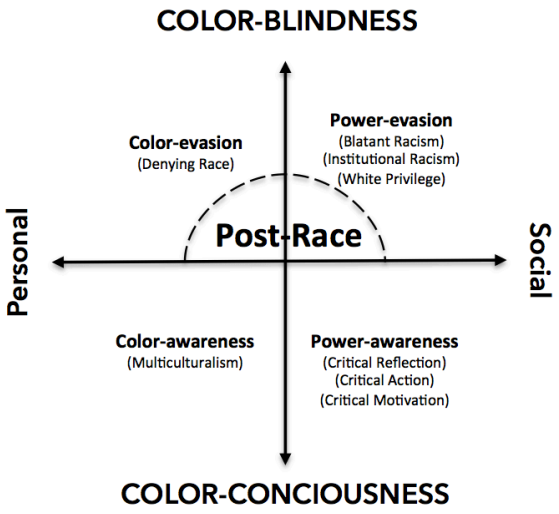

Figure 1. Shades of seeing color in color-blindness and color-consciousness

DEFINING POST-RACIALISM

Post-raciality formalizes a conceptual and theoretical framework in which to ground the socio-cultural environment that dismisses, de-centralizes, and distorts ethnorace (or color) from perception but not sight. Put simply, race does not matter and therefore should not be noticed, discussed, or taken into account; that we have transcended the color line and become a color-neutral and rainbow nation. Post-raciality can, however, work as a twenty-first-century ideology about race and color. When taken as such, it is best conceptualized as post-racialism – a system of ideas, myths, narratives, and symbolic configurations (or projects) that obscure the significance of race(ism) in society and benefits certain (elite) actors and institutions (Cho, 2009; Griffin, 2015;

Powell, 2008). While post-racialism (and post-raciality) share features and objectives with color-blindness, for Cho (2009), the latter "offers a largely normative claim for a retreat from race that is aspirational in nature" (p. 1598). Both, moreover, seem to "converge (around the retreat from race imperative and shared features) and diverge (around racial transcendence as descriptive trigger and marketability or branding)" (p. Cho, 2009, p. 1599).

This dissertation relies on post-raciality to situate and explain the optimistic and salient discourse that renders race(ism) obsolete in relationships and as a pervasive concern for structural and institutional inequalities. Empirically, post-raciality will be operationalized through color-blind attitudes due to their linked rhetoric (Bobo, 2011; Cho, 2009; Manning, Hartmann, & Gerteis, 2015). The discussions of study findings, while insightful for post-raciality in general, are best contextualized through post-racialism. One intention of this protect is to uncover patterns and meanings given to color in symbolic and mediated contexts like television under post-race. This is why post-racialism seems like an appropriate interpretive device, because of the interest in discussing the ideological workings of post-raciality and its doctrines about race(ism). This study is interested in taking part of the debate about post-racial logics instead of laying out empirical evidence about its existence. By doing so, the discussion is not limited to yes/no facts about race(ism) in society (Powell, 2008), but instead, it shifts to a deeper debate about subtle and sophisticated ethnoracial ideologies that inform thinking, attitudes, and actions (Bobo, 2011; Bonilla-Silva, 2013).

COLOR-BLINDNESS: WHAT IS IT?

Color-blindness is a passive yet optimistic solution to the social, cultural, and economic conflicts that American society experiences at the expense of ethnicity and/or race (Bell, 2016; Tarca, 2005). As an ideology, color-blindness cultivates a habitus of ethnoracial evasion, whether in the form of not seeing race as an identity component or dismissing its presence in shaping socio-cultural advantages, biases, and inequalities among other manifestations (Gallagher, 2003; Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000; Neville *et al.*, 2013; Sullivan & Tuana, 2007). One can perform colorblindness through a social and cultural etiquette that encourages friendships and romances with others who belong to ethnic and racial outgroups. By purging race and ethnicity from one's identity politics, one can achieve political correctness, ethnoracial sensitivity and tolerance, plus interracial neutrality and fairness. Social and cultural institutions are perceived to follow this interpersonal rhetoric of sameness. Any biased practices or discrimination committed by financial, government, and education institutions are not ethnically or racially related, leaving room to exercise subtle forms of racism such as denying bank loans or restricting college admissions (Bonilla-Silva, 2016). Racial-blindness can excuse the moral responsibility of institutions for not properly mitigating and securing basic human rights. Such accounts led scholars to name racial-blindness as an ultramodern type of racism (Neville *et al*., 2013), *turning a blind eye* (Jones, 2016), or engaging in *strategic ignorance* (Sullivan & Tuana, 2007) because it masks self-serving and group needs (Bell, 2016; Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Powell, 2008). Essentially, the ethos of

colorblindness rests in two dynamics: color-evasion and power-evasion (Neville *et al*., 2013).

Simplistically, not seeing or avoiding seeing race summarizes the color-evasion approach to colorblindness, but its ideological undertone is sameness – a socio-cultural world where skin color does not define social worth, ability, opportunity, or the self. By rejecting ethnoracial superiority to accommodate equality, the founding American myth of meritocracy persists, perpetuating the correlational notion that fairness and social mobility are dependent on one's hard work instead of from being part of a collective. Group categorizations are discouraged, while idiosyncrasies and personality assessments encouraged; this way, group biases are minimized (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Gallagher, 2003). Race is, however, welcomed as a pictorial component of diversity as long as no member in the multicultural collage is given worth at the social identity level. In other words, ethnoracial differences are superficial and not worthy of attention, and if they are pointed out, they could be equated with stereotyping (Babbitt, Toosi, & Sommers, 2016).

Power-evasion colorblindness dismisses racism contemporarily by avoiding thinking about how race is tied to power. Because systematic, institutional, or structural biases and inequalities are a thing of the past, people feel that social activism and political intervention are no longer needed. Racism is neither politically correct nor socially acceptable, because racism is reminiscent of the old America (Neville *et al.*, 2013). If racism occurs, racist acts and expressions are first treated as isolated events, and secondly, such cases are believed to reflect the identity politics of the perpetrator and not those of a political or cultural establishment. Racism acquires an interpersonal definition

characterized by personal and individual reasonability and culpability (Gallagher, 2003; Apollon, 2011; Shome, 2000). By reducing racism to interpersonal discrimination and ill intent, one does not critique the social and systematic forces that shape racial (White) privilege and socio-cultural barriers; instead, one sustains the race-based ideologies about domination and superiority through inaction and consent (Doane & Bonilla-Silva, 2003). Similarly, opportunity is seen as individually produced and awarded, not the result of systematic practices flawed with group-based favoritism and ideology (Rodriguez, 2000). Overall, three interrelated systematic disbeliefs comprise power-evasion racial-blindness, avoiding belief in: (1) blatant forms of racism (i.e., racism is abolished); (2) institutional racism (i.e., no policy or practice benefits one group over another), and (3) White racial privilege (i.e., whiteness and skin color dictating advantages or disadvantages) (Awad & Jackson, 2016; Neville *et al*., 2000, Neville *et al*., 2013).

Racial-blindness is a malleable ideology about race, ethnicity, and cultural diversity that not only suits one's needs, but it also reflects what others want to see (Babbitt *et al*., 2016; Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Bell, 2016; Jones, 2016). Whites, who individually exhibit low social dominance, may genuinely deem colorblindness as a socio-cultural method for racial harmony or as a mechanism that shields ethnoracial minorities from judgments (Goff, Jackson, Nichols, & DiLeone, 2013). For Whites with self-beneficial intentions, however, colorblindness is a form of soft power that maintains the status quo by allowing inequalities go unquestioned (Saguy, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2008). Under a colorblind rhetoric of diversity and inclusion, whites who previously felt excluded from multiculturalism are now official members of the ethnoracial collage,

especially in contexts where diversity is valued (Plaut, Garnett, Buffardi, Sanchez-Burks, 2011). Colorblindness can deflect the conflict between ethnoracial minorities and majorities that may arise in daily interpersonal contact (Rattan & Ambady, 2013). This form of colorblindness may also reduce the likelihood of offending ethnoracial groups, and more pertinent to whites, it reduces the risks of being perceived a racist (Apfelbaum, Sommers, & Norton, 2008). Colorblindness is not a self-chosen, conscious, or deliberate examined ideology, but one that was inherited through social norms – in others words, it is a default intergroup approach (Apfelbaum, Pauker, Sommers, Ambady, 2010).

Racial-blindness has the capacity of normalizing institutional and interpersonal racism as blatant occurrences, excluding subtle manifestations of racism in its sanctioned directory of ethnoracial prejudice (Bonilla-Silva, 2013, 2016). One important question then becomes: What is racism in a color-blind society? Whites often continue to primarily see racism as the outcomes of a racial doctrine of supremacy, with verbal and physical actions as dominant and obvious expressions of racism (Apollon, 2011; Gallagher, 2003). Ethnoracial minorities, in contrast, tend to situate racism within broader socio-political practices and mechanisms that enable the social dominance of a majoritarian ethnoracial group (Apollon, 2011). Racism is either perceived an individual pathology, or unfair systematic treatment, depending on ethnoracial membership. The former reduces racism to overt personal misbehavior and uses good-bad rhetoric to describe actions, and the latter includes the role of nationalism in racism and situates it as a social, structural, and institutional problem (Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014; Bonilla-Silva, 2016; Squires, 2014). With racial-blindness entering the mix of race relations in

contemporary America, it makes it more difficult to detect racism in everyday life that is not necessarily explicit like in the Jim Crow era (Bobo, 2011; Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014; Neville *et al.*, 2013).

COLOR-CONSCIOUSNESS: WHAT IS IT?

Unlike color-blindness, color-consciousness (or *racial cognizance*) recognizes how race and ethnicity affect social, cultural, and political dynamics and opportunities (Appiah & Gutman, 1998). Color-consciousness fuses critical awareness, social responsibility, and action to address the unbalanced assignation of social status and opportunity across ethnoracial groups. Since color-conscious individuals are mindful of the policies and practices that produce and maintain power structures, both historically and longitudinally, this motivates them to actively challenge the injustices and abuses that a majoritarian (White) group implement (Bell, 2016). Color-blindness discourages collectivities on the basis of culture, race, and ethnicity so that a sense of objectivity is secured. Conversely, color-consciousness understands that only an inclusive and democratic community comprised of ethnoracial diversity can secure and produce multi-group welfares (Bell, 2016).

By definition, color-consciousness connotes an active state of ethnoracial self-reflection that sets in motion a vigilant gaze, which is able to detect modalities of racism ranging from overt exhibitions (e.g., hate crimes, public segregation, marginal public and mediated representation) to covert manifestations (e.g., race talk, colorblind ideologies, gentrification). Its attention to race(ism) positions racial-consciousness as more suitable

solution in reducing interracial tensions than color-blindness (Bell, 2016; Jones, 2016; Squires, 2014). It is important to note that awareness of racism is not enough to motivate anti-racism. What is also needed is ethnoracial competence and sympathy, which can be gathered through interpersonal contact and engagement with racial Others (Jones, 2016; Müller, 2009). One should have a better grasp of the judgments, emotional responses, and experiences that inform racial discrimination and prejudice.

Color-consciousness has also been subjected to criticism. One potent criticism is its treatment of race as biological and a totalizing identity. Since power and hegemony frame color-consciousness, race overpowers other cultural meanings and social identities that accompany it. Of concern here is how other axes of difference and marginality (e.g., gender, social class, religion, abledness) are shifted to the periphery to foreground race or ethnicity (Guinier & Torres, 2002). The self is reduced again to categories as opposed to fleshing out its complexity and intersectional identity that situates people's social positions and subjectivities. Scholars suggest using *contingent color consciousness* (see Appiah & Gutmann, 1998) or *race ambivalence* (see Leonardo, 2013) to overcome some of drawbacks of racial-consciousness. The former recognizes the conditional use of race to discuss its sociological and political effects, while the latter encourages reflection about the conceptual limitations of race theory. Others propose *political race* (Guinier & Torres, 2002), where one teases the complexities of race first before building cross-racial/ethnic relationships and subjectivities. Moreover, intersectional theory recognizes that the self is comprised of multiple, interconnected, and overlapping social identities that ultimately produce unique standpoints associated with discrimination, disadvantage,

and oppression or domination (see Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013). Lastly, articulation theory examines how different axes of identity are combined, united, and related – the self is not random occurrence but an entity comprised of structured relations of dominance and subordination (see Angus, 1992).

This dissertation conceptualizes color-consciousness as part of critical consciousness. Like its parent, color-consciousness has three core components: critical reflection (i.e., a perceptual element), critical motivation (i.e., an agentic element), and critical action or activism (i.e., a behavioral element) (Diemer, McWhirter, Ozer, & Rapa, 2015; Freire, 2002; Watts, Diemer, & Voight, 2011). Moreover, these three domains encapsulate overall power-awareness as they critique racial oppression and marginality in society. Specifically, ethnoracial critical reflection describes the process by which people see and read their existence in a stratified world that bestows social worth based on racial or ethnic membership (Diemer *et al*,, 2015). Ethnoracial critical motivation underscores the political efficacy, commitment, or agency that one possesses to dismantle the injustices and inequalities that occur on the basis of race and ethnicity (Diemer *et al*,, 2015). Lastly, ethnoracial critical action considers the specific actions that can counter, amend, or change conditions of ethnoracial injustice in a liberatory manner (Diemer *et al*,, 2015). Power-awareness presents marginalized and oppressed ethnoracial groups with a symbolic resource—in the form of human agency—that could be used to oppose, resist, and overcome the structural constrains that face them. Nevertheless, structural changes happen with the selection of the most appropriate and contextual measures (Freire, 2002; Watts, Griffith, & Abdul-Adil,1999).

Multiculturalism directly contrasts color-evasion racial-blindness (see Neville *et al*., 2013). Multiculturalism appreciates ethnic, cultural, and racial pluralism and finds that the rich histories and customs of groups can contribute to societies with problematic racial histories (Gullett & West, 2016; Neville *et al*., 2013; Rosenthal & Levy, 2012). One benefit of multiculturalism is its ability to encourage inter-cultural competence (Müller, 2009; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010), which in turn, fosters understandings about the racialized and ethnicitized realities of various others. Multiculturalism can also have prosocial effects such as tolerance toward ethnoracial minority groups. Multiculturalism preserves ethnic, cultural, and racial identities of all groups, which means that ethnoracial minorities are not pressured to assimilate into norm of the dominant culture. Unlike color-evasion racial-blindness, color-aware racial consciousness—defined through multiculturalism—values the contributions of race and ethnicity in defining the self.

COLOR-BLIND OR -CONSCIOUS: WHERE DO MILLENNIALS STAND?

Millennials account for 30% of the U.S. population and are the most ethnoracially diverse age generation to date (Doherty, Kiley, & Jameson, 2015a; Taylor, Doherty, Parker, & Krishnamurthy, 2014). Millennials are almost equally divided, if dichotomized, between an ethnoracial majority (51%) and minority (49%), whereas older generations are at least two-thirds White (Duherhy, Kiley, Tyson, & Jameson, 2015b). This pronounced ethnoracial diversity in Millennials is what fuels the popular narrative of them being appreciative and tolerant of human difference. Indeed, about 70% of Millennials say they do not see ethnoracial minorities any differently from Whites (MTV,

2014). Generally, about half of Millennials are likely to see themselves as tolerant of other races and groups (49%) – a statistic that is higher than older age cohorts (19%) (Taylor & Keeter, 2009). Yet, recent statistics say that it is about one-third of Millennials that see themselves as somewhat tolerant (Duherhy *et al*., 2015a). Other generational traits contradict their caring disposition and openness, as more than half described their generation as self-absorbed (59%) (Duherhy *et al*., 2015a) and about a fifth say that others can be trusted (19%) (Taylor et al., 2014). Still, a great majority says that fairness is an aspiration for them (91%) (MTV, 2014).

Market research seems to stress Millennials' colorblindness. One widely cited MTV report (2014) found that most Millennials (90%), aged 14 to 24, felt that all should be treated equally regardless of their race, and that any racial preferences are unfair (88%). More support for colorblind attitudes come from Millennials' view that social progress can happen if race is not considered (71%). Naturally, about two-thirds feel that a colorblind society cannot happen if it stresses race (68%). Older research found that less than half of Millennials (45%) agreed that some preferential treatment should be given to ethnic and racial minorities to improve their position (Taylor & Keeter, 2009). One strong conclusion is that Millennials are fluent in colorblindness and diversity; yet, as will become apparent in the next paragraph, illiterate in the language of anti-racism.

Millennials tend to define racism as interpersonal acts of hatred and intolerance, or said differently, as personal bigotry (Apollon, 2011; Gallagher, 2003; Smith, 2015). Racists and racism are reduced to micro-level and overt occurrences; committed by those who discriminate on the basis of skin color and/or the negative cultural stereotypes they

have come to internalize and believe. In fact, more adults see individual racism (66%) as the bigger problem against Blacks than institutional racism (23%). The sentiment that individual racism is most important seems to carry with both Whites (70%) and Blacks (48%), but Blacks (40%) are more likely to say discrimination is built into laws and institutions than Whites (19%) (Pew Research Center, 2016). The logic of racism as personal acts of ethnoracial prejudice encourages the belief that minorities are racists too and social agents of reverse racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2013).

Ethnoracial membership is key to who tends to endorse colorblind attitudes and an interpersonal definition of racism. The results of a qualitative study with 16 focus groups comprised of Millennials between the ages 18 to 25 found that ethnoracial minorities tended to see US social systems as racist and engaging in systematic racial biases than White participants (Apollon, 2011). Both ethnoracial groups, were likely to agree that racism existed in the criminal and housing systems yet minorities still noticed more racism in the educational and immigration systems than Whites. In general, Millennials who possessed direct experience with community organizations and/or the knowledge from college courses about race and ethnicity typically defined racism beyond personal prejudice.

Ethnoracial differences also emerge based on belief in how people are threated due to race. Compared to ethnoracial minority Millennials (27%, 21%), White Millennials are more likely to think that discrimination against White people is as big of a problem today as those committed against ethnoracial minority groups (48%) or that the government pays too much attention to the problems of ethnoracial minorities (41%)

(MTV, 2014). Similar sentiments were expressed in other research, where over half of White Millennials (58%) say discrimination affects White people as much as it does ethnoracial minorities (Smith, 2015). Only 39% of Latin@ or 24% of Black Millennials tended to agree. Among adults, Blacks (70%) are about twice more likely to cite racial discrimination as a major reason why they have a harder time getting ahead than Whites (36%) (Pew Research Center, 2016). Even ethnoracial minority youth (65%) tend to agree that Whites have more opportunities of getting ahead than White Millennials (39%) (MTV, 2014).

There is a strong inclination and empirical support to label Millennials the poster children of colorblindness. However, this generation does not feel comfortable talking about racial bias (20%) in spite of believing that we should openly talk about it (79%) (MTV, 2014). On top of this contradiction, there is intra-group disagreement on whether the government should censor offensive speech directed at ethnoracial minorities, where over half believe does not want to (58%) – opinions primarily held by Whites and men (Poushter, 2015). Still, Millennials remain optimistic racism about eradicating racism in the future, with 58% of them agreeing it will lessen (MTV, 2014). Clearly, Millennials are not a monolithic age cohort and are ambivalent on the state of race and/or ethnicity in society. Even if most share a belief in equality and neutrality, they also lack a common dialogue about structural and new forms of subtle racism. What is certain is that Millennials are placed under a magnifying glass and expected to solve the muddled legacy of race(ism) they inherited from previous age generations. How they see color is

therefore crucial in them finding that language will enable more productive conversations about race and racism.

MILLENNIALS, TELEVISION, AND POST-RACIALITY

Comparatively, Millennials watch less television than other age cohorts. Market research has found that about 75% of those aged 31 and younger watch television; the number increases to 89% and higher for those older than 49 (Verizon, n.d.). Even the mean time spent on television is lower for Millennials (18.4 hours) than non-Millennials (25.6 hours) (Verizon, 2014). Such statistics seem to suggest that television is unimportant for Millennials (currently those born after 1980; Duherhy *et al*., 2015a, 2015b); yet, the fact is that television is their top entertainment medium. Millennials are first interested in watching a television show they like before turning to music or even social media (Verizon, 2014).

Indeed, about 81% of Millennials watch television – a number higher than statistics for Facebook (73%) and other social media (Buzz MG, 2016). The television practices of Millennials are selective and active too. For instance, when they watch television, they tend to know what they want (54%), as opposed to browsing for something to watch (46%). The inverse can be found with non-Millennials, where they are more likely to browse television (59%) rather than going right into something (41%) (Verizon, 2014). The importance of television among Millennials is evident; therefore, what television offers Millennials needs some examination, particular its offerings about people of color – the topic of interest here.

Color inclusion, the involvement of more people of color—both in front and behind the camera—is rising on television and film. The increment, however, is not monumental but is on a sluggish but steady clime. For instance, from 2011 to 2013, scripted television content with ethnoracial minority leads did not grow more than 4% for either broadcast or cable shows (Hunt *et al*., 2015). Specifically, broadcast programming where ethnoracial minorities comprised 0-20% of leads rose slightly from 58.5% to 58.9% (a 0.4 increase). It again rose from 39.5% to 41.1% (a 0.6% increase) in programming featuring 21-50% ethnoracial minority casts; while the numbers declined for shows where ethnoracial minorities made-up more than 51% of the leading characters from 2.0% to 0% (a 2% decrease). The numbers were more optimistic for scripted programming on cable television: 0-20% ethnoracial minority casts (62.3% to 63.4%; a 1.1% increase), 21-50% (29.3% to 25.8%; a 3.5% decrease), and 51%+ (8.4% to 10.8%; a 2.4% increase).

On top of this splash of color on television, it seems that the programming with more people of color is well viewed among audiences, and in some cases higher among viewers who do not share the same ethnoracial membership of the main characters. According to the Nielsen ratings, *Black-ish* (79%), *Scandal* (68%), and *How to Get Away with Murder* (69%) and other popular TV shows with Black characters average at least a 50% non-Black viewership (Schneider, 2017). Other Nielsen data finds that the viewership of television shows with predominantly Asian characters such as *Dr. Ken* (ABC) and *Fresh Off the Boat* (ABC) were about the same for Asian and the general population if not higher the former (Nielsen, 2017). Millennials even reported *Orange is*

the New Black (Netflix, 2013—) as a top-watched television program in 2015 (Barna, 2015). The conclusion is: Diversity sells (at least today), and color appears to be a driving force behind its success (Hunt et al., 2015, 2016).

Color is arguably noticeable onscreen and features many hues and mixtures. This symbolic inclusion is enough for social and cultural commentators (Squires, 2014; Vega, 2013) to read and proclaim contemporary television as post-racial and colorblind – a sentiment is that intensified by television programs with multicultural casts that communicate inter-color unity (Nilsen & Turner, 2014). Still, the fact is that television is White-heavy (Tukachinsky et al., 2015), with ethnoracial minorities under-represented nearly 6-to-1 in leads on scripted, broadcast shows and nearly 2-to-1 as leads on cable (Hunt *et al*., 2015). Moreover, color seems to be pushed to certain television genres (Signorelli, 2009) and networks (this has been the case for ABC for open-network television and BET or MTV tr3s for cable television). This color seclusion in turn decreases audiences' opportunities of seeing non-White characters onscreen and dependent on their media diets. Undeniably, television is filled with contradictions about color and what it means in larger society, from what its televisuality signifies to its quality onscreen.

The mixed-inclusion of color onscreen—given its numeric incongruences and the clashing one- and three-dimensional portrayals—may add cognitive and emotional dissonance to an already ambivalent reaction that Millennials experience with seeing color. It seems that media creators and marketers will not stop from commodifying their supposed taste for television content that is socially conscious (Nededog, 2016) – a belief

that is shaped by Millennials' perceived upbringing in equality and neutrality. Color on television is apparently moving in post-racial directions, following (or perhaps setting) Millennials' taste for color-inclusive television. The question still remains: How are Millennials sorting out color onscreen?

This dissertation project focuses on two competing ideologies of seeing color—color-blindness and color-consciousness—in reception practices related to the current vogue of color inclusion on television. Both exist in Millennials, and the literature expects for one attitude to be higher than the other, with ethnoracial minorities gearing for color-consciousness. If television celebrates and disfranchises ethnoracial minorities onscreen, then Millennials' readings of color will swing in the direction of the color pendulum. In other words, they will tend to agree and endorse the color ideology that television content makes salient. So, colorblind content leads to colorblind thinking and the onscreen marginality of ethnoracial groups cultivates a color-conscious attitude. These assumptions are explored in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively. The contribution of this dissertation is in identifying the television content and portrayals of ethnoracial groups that Millennials' find noteworthy while seeing color according to dominant cultural frameworks. Only then can we start discussing television as contributing to post-raciality and post-racialism – at least for Millennials.

CHAPTER 2. Color-blind TV content: Does it contribute to color-blindness?

Media audiences are generally dichotomized and polarized into active or passive audiences, based on their commitment (or lack thereof) to critically dissect and politicize the cultural texts they consume (Baker, 2006; Morley, 2006). Early audience theories (e.g., hypodermic needle theory) posited that mass media had direct and strong effects on its consumers, given the perception that audiences were one-grand homogeneous and uncritical mass. More recently, media audiences are recognized as heterogeneous subgroups who actively negotiate and contextualize their meaning of media texts according to what standpoints and identity politics, taste and interests, values and attitudes, or backgrounds (e.g., family histories, education, cultural, political) they bring into their media experience (Bobo, 1995; Baker, 2006; Hall, 2001b; Morley, 1992; Radway, 1991). The debate continues, however, whether the media is an omnipotent persuasive force on its audiences or not, and empirical work and cultural criticism of media often discusses the degree of symbolic influence it has and whether audience member accepts, rejects, or negotiates the ideologies embedded in media content.

The turn to what has been described as post-racial media reflects a recent move in reproducing the current perceived state of ethnoracial relations in America – one that is color-blind (Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014; Squires, 2014; Warner, 2015). A colorblind screen relies on visual signifiers of racial diversity and inclusion. For instance, the use of raceless aesthetics—which includes the preference for ethnoracially ambiguous or mixed-race characters in narratives (Beltrán, 2005, 2013; Beltrán & Fojas, 2008; Molina-Guzmán, 2013)—or by simply showcasing an egalitarian, color rainbow (Brook, 2009).

Other representation strategies include assimilating ethnoracial minorities into White, middle class sensibilities (Avila-Saavedra, 2009; Campbell, 2016; Jhally & Lewis, 1992; Gray, 2004; Ono & Pham, 2009). Clearly, color exists onscreen, and qualitative studies of media audiences find that people are driven to racialized narratives and characters because of their perceived universality and/or symbolism of meritocratic social mobility (Inniss & Feagin, 1995; Jhally & Lewis, 1992; Kretsedemas, 2014; Molina-Guzmán, 2010; Rockler, 2002; Squires, 2014). It is evident that media audiences bring color-blind discourses to their media experiences, but is the relationship reciprocal – meaning, could media influence their thoughts in color-blind ways?

This chapter asks what the role of post-racial TV content is in cultivating color-blind attitudes. Exploring this relationship showcases the tensions, negotiations, and oppositions that Millennials may experience with racial ideologies that encourage seeing color, only if it is to de-politicize ethnicity and race (Hollinger, 2011; Nayak, 2006). Specifically, it centers on television and the socialization of race, since popular culture (re)produces dominant and contemporary frames of racial thought (Bounds Littlefield, 2008; Gorham, 1999; Bandura, 2001). Specifically, this study examines two layers of post-racial TV content: (1) offerings of entertainment, colorblind programming and (2) exceptional television representations of ethnoracial groups. In doing so, the results of this study will identity *what* about the colorblind screen "works" and merits further attention within a coveted multicultural TV audience – Millennials.

MILLENNIALS AND TELEVISION: CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

Millennials are deeply immersed with electronic media (Perrin, 2015; Steel & Marsh, 2015), with television content still outperforming Internet entertainment like social media when it comes to time allocation (Valentine & Powers, 2013;Verizon, 2014). But what are Millennials watching on television? Online studies conducted by Barna (2014, 2015) report that dramas and sitcoms generally typify the genre preference for adults aged 18 to 49, yet Millennials display higher preferences for each (56% and. 48% respectively) than Xers (43%, 48%) (see Barna, 2015). Given this content taste, it is not surprising that adults consistently watched *The Big Bang Theory* (CBS), *Criminal Minds* (CBS), and *The Walking Dead* (AMC) during 2014 and 2015 (Barna, 2014, 2015). Millennials, however, included *Game of Thrones* (HBO) or *Orange is the New Black* (Netflix) into their top three watched shows in 2014 and 2015 respectively, while Xers favored *Duck Dynasty* (A&E) or *NCIS* (CBS) during these years into their rosters of regularly watched shows.

Some media reports go on to suggest that the ethnic/racial diversity of shows' casts can impact the preference, satisfaction, and/or success of films and television programs among audiences (Hunt *et al*., 2015; Hunt, Ramón, & Tran, 2016). Among the top 200 grossing films during 2013 and 2014, films that had 41 to 50% ethnoracial diverse casts (e.g., *Big Hero 6*, *Rio 2*, *Lucy*, *Annie*) earned the most money globally ($122 million), while films with less than 10% minority characters did the poorest in ticket sales ($52.6 million) (Hunt *et al*., 2015). Top audience ratings are also observed with TV content that employ heterogeneous ethnic/racial characters. Over-the-air TV shows that

featured at least 51% of minority characters (for example, *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, *Gang Related*, *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, *Hawaii Five-O*) enjoyed the highest audience ratings across ethnic groups and the overall age group (ages 18 to 49) during the 2013-14 TV season. Comparatively, broadcast TV programming with casts that were no more than 10% minority had the lowest audience ratings (Hunt *et al*., 2015). On cable, the TV audience ratings of ethnic groups were more sporadic during the same 2013-2014 season. Black viewers (2.33), and the overall 18-40 age group (.27 ratings), watched cable entertainment TV content with more than half minority characters (examples include *Devious Maids*, *Black Jesus*, *Loiter Squad*; *Being Mary Jane*). Latin@s preferred content with 31-40% minority characters (.41 ratings) (i.e., *Thundermans*, *Wolfblood*, *Suits*), Whites preferred 21-30% diverse casts (.49 ratings) (i.e., *The Walking Dead*, *Major Crimes*, *The Last Ship*, *Covert Affairs*), and Asians favored content with the least amount of diversity (.31 ratings) – less than 10% (i.e., *Person of Interest*, *The Strain*, *The Americans*, *Psych*).

MILLENNIALS AND TELEVISION: COLOR-BLIND READINGS

The existing literature about media audiences and racial-blindness is limited and mostly come from studies based on qualitative methodologies (Hughey, 2014; Kretsedemas, 2014; Ibrahim, 2014; Rockler, 2002; Squires, 2014). This research corpus tends to agree that young audiences perform color-blind readings of media texts that featured color difference. Kretsedemas (2014) noted that racially and ethnically mixed focus groups that watched segments of *Ugly Betty* spoke about them mostly through a

perceptual lens of culture-blindness. He argued that in similar ways racialized bodies are ignored through racial-blindness, the racialization of culture is dismissed too. Culture-blindness, according to Kretsedemas (2014), was observed in at least two audience responses to *Ugly Betty*: (1) the ways in which Betty Suarez was deemed American, a Brooklyn girl, or someone who is incidentally Mexican, and (2) the perceived universality of family values of the Suarez family despite them being an immigrant Mexican family whose patriarch faced deportation. For focus group participants, transcending the particularities of Latin@ culture, in an effort to look beyond race and ethnicity, enabled culture-blindness.

Squires (2014) offers another interpretation of colorblindness among media audiences of post-racial texts. She contends that viewers of *Parenthood* are cognizant of racial difference within the TV program, but their racial thinking was not linked to stereotypes or racism. She found that on Facebook, White viewers of *Parenthood* largely wrote about Jasmine's (Black) unfit motherhood. To them, she was manipulative and controlling, therefore not deserving of Crosby – her White romantic partner. Their biracial child (Jabbar) was also subjected to discussion, mostly if he was Crosby's son because his skin tone did not show the *proper* racial blend. The persistence of black matriarch stereotypes and the assumptions of race as biology suggest the ways in which post-racial media texts compliment traditional racial thinking as opposed to contesting it.

Watching media that is racially colorblind may cultivate negative attitudes toward ethnoracial minorities instead of alleviating the social, cultural, and political outcomes of race(ism). Such has been the case with *The Cosby Show* (see Jhally & Lewis, 1992),

where White audiences cultivated a sense of what they termed enlightened racism from watching the TV show – a meritocratic disposition that blames Black themselves for not making it in America; if the Huxtables made it, so could the others. One main reason people welcomed the Huxtables into their homes was due to how well they recreated a middle-class family onscreen; such perception encouraged people to de-racialize them and believe that color should not be an issue to engage with an affluent, well-adjusted Black family.

Unquestionably, media/television audiences can and often do decode media texts in color-blind ways. The question should now be: Who is more likely to do so? It is very likely that ethnoracial minorities come into their media experience with experiences of marginalization and oppression, and therefore are more vigilant than Whites about noticing what ways media devalues their ethnoracial groups. In fact, only about a third of ethnoracial minority Millennials (33%) stated that their race was well represented in the media compared to almost two-third of the White majority (64%) (MTV, 2014).

Rockler (2002) found that Black and Whites audiences employed different terministic screens—perceptual lenses that determine meaning—in order to make sense of the racial and political tones of two African-American comic-strips: *The Boondocks* and *Jump Start*. Because White audiences tended to see the comics as funny, they described the racial contexts and meanings as "light," or that they were not racist comparatively to true essentialist racists, they employed a "terministic screen of Whiteness" that disabled and deflected any acknowledgment of how race informs privilege, oppression, and the dominance of Whiteness as a cultural standard. Black

viewers, in contrast, largely employed a terministic screen of racial cognizance as they acknowledged the racially explicit and "dark" political criticism of the comics (particularly that of *The Boondocks*), plus they recognized that comedic texts may not be the best medium or genre to talk about racial issues. Since Blacks experience racial oppression and inequalities in their lives, they evoked the "terministic screen of racial cognizance" as a means of talking about the realities that are relevant and meaningful to them. This is why *The Boondocks* was a closer text to their experiences as this comic strip featured Black culture (e.g., rap music and related entertainment) and subjectivities, unlike *Jump Start* that tended to downplay its Blackness, which was therefore more liked by White readers.

Similarly, audiences in Squires's (2014) study of Facebook groups were more critical depending on ethnic group status. Fans of Jasmine on *Parenthood*, which happened to be mostly women of color, tended to defend her against the negative Black matriarch stereotypes that White viewers had, often filling in the gaps when enough context is given in the show or questioned the knowledge of show writers in portraying a single black mother who is romantically involved with a White man. By not accepting the realities presented to them on screen, ethnoracial minority audiences express that race and ethnicity are meaningful not only in making sense of media texts, but also how these markers of difference define characters status in the narratives that they are consuming.

DEFINING COLOR-BLIND TELEVISION CONTENT: PROGRAMS AND REPRESENTATIONS

The media inclusion of *difference* is sometimes the result of demographic shifts and/or the activism of cultural and political organizations (Brook, 2009; Dávila, 2012; Ono & Pham, 2009). Millennials are the most ethnoracially diverse generation to date, and this multiculturalism prevents media creators from producing television content that is exclusively White or mono-ethnoracial. Onscreen diversity has become the all-inclusive solution to matters of difference, whether is ethnic/racial or not.

This study examines three types of television shows that feature ethnic/racial difference and ultimately offer *color* onscreen: (1) multicultural, (2) minority-leading, and (3) White-dominant programming. Each is differentiated by who the main characters are and the cast's overall ethnoracial homogeneity (Chidester, 2008; Hunt *et al*., 2015, 2016). Multicultural TV programs are the least ethnoracially homogenous, because the goal is to showcase ethnic and racial pluralism (Brook, 2009). Minority-leading TV programs feature protagonists and supporting characters of predominantly one ethnoracial minority group. Color is determined through the cast and not necessarily by the storylines (Market, 2007; Warner, 2015). Lastly, White-dominant TV programs include ethnoracial minorities but are outnumbered by White characters, in addition to a narrative whose focus is Whiteness (Molina-Guzmán, 2012). The connecting theme across these cultural texts is the narrative inclusion and visuality of inter-ethnic/racial relationships, which renders its universe as culturally open, tolerant, and conflict-free (Beltrán, 2013; Turner, 2014).

How the above TV shows present ethnic difference further reveals what is colorblind about seeing color. Color-blindness is not just about showing and adding color to television; it is about assigning no meaning to color, positioning all ethnoracial groups in the same playing field. It neutralizes their socio-cultural worth, in other words. Brook (2009) helps us understand the convergence of difference according to how ethnoracial minorities are interwoven into major story arcs, consequently creating a textual interdependence for all characters. This inter-character dependence is only heightened by their presumed egalitarian position, making characters up to par with each other (e.g., screen time, morality, social status). Lastly, interracial romances are boldly highlighted. Collectively, these three elements communicate the idea that characters—regardless of their ethnic/racial background—are narratively similar, therefore possessing similar symbolic value.

When portrayals of ethnoracial minorities diverge from negative stereotypes, these are taken as optimistic signs of ethnic/racial progression onscreen (Inniss & Feagin, 1995; Jhally & Lewis, 1992; Mora & Kang, 2016; Merskin, 2011). So, what images count as racially progressive for ethnoracial minorities? Media audience studies point to the middle-class hero or those with pronounced cultural capital (Jhally & Lewis, 1992; Rojas & Piñon, 2016). The ideal character is rich, self-supporting, educated, and familistic –characteristics common in mainstream (White) characters (Chidester, 2008; Hughey, 2014; Mastro & Kopacz, 2006; Ortega & Feagin, 2016; Ramírez Berg, 2002). It seems that ethnoracial minorities who embody, reproduce, and circulate this (mainstream) characterization are those who have assimilated into or approximate

Whiteness – the cultural and symbolic norm (Campbell, 2016; Gray, 2004; Ono & Pham, 2009). These characters are depicted as exceptional and worthy of honorary Whiteness for not recreating the old, deviant, and non-idealized cultural deficiencies (e.g., lazy, bad parenthood, terrible work ethic) that are believed to define the larger ethnoracial group (Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014). While optimistic and positive, there is a fear attached to the depictions of ethnoracial exceptionalism onscreen. For minority audiences, the concern is that these television images render racial inequalities as non-existent, or that social opportunities are no longer structured by race (Innis & Feagin, 1995). Ultimately, post-racial representations propagate dangerous myths about the realities of color offscreen.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Color—code for ethnoracial minorities—has been part of television almost since its inception but was strategically incorporated and *visible* (Gray, 2004; Merskin, 2011; Valdivia, 2010). Including color has been dependent (partly) on the need to commodify the multiculturalism found in the demographics shifts of audiences (Brook, 2009; Dávila, 2012). In recreating post-raciality on television, the colorblind screen has increased its offering of cultural texts and images with content that feature various modes of ethnic and racial diversity (Nielsen & Turner, 2014). This study is interested in how post-racial television content relates to color-blind attitudes. Research on this topic has mainly been textual analyses of television programming or film and post-raciality (Beltrán, 2013; Brook, 2009; Esposito, 2010; Joseph, 2009; Turner, 2014), and the few studies on

audiences have found that people enact post-racial thinking when making-sense of texts (Kretsedemas, 2014; Squires, 2014). This study continues their conversations and extends post-racial media research first by studying two shades of colorblindness (Doane, 2014), and secondly, by contrasting numerous types of television and entertainment programming plus the dignified representations of four ethnoracial groups. Previous media research tends to study the ideological implications of one program in-depth (e.g., Esposito, 2009; Joseph, 2009), or examines the numeric presence of various ethnic groups through the methodology of content analysis (e.g., Tukachinsky et al., 2015). The research here examines three types of entertainment programming and one positive depiction of color that are expected to be in agreement with colorblind thinking. While specific hypotheses could be made in relationship to the reviewed literature, research questions fit this study more, since it is differencing colorblind between attitudes when previous research has not done so. Therefore the research questions of this study are:

> RQ1: How are multicultural, minority-leading, White-dominant TV programs related to the two dimensions of color-blindness: color-evasion and power-evasion? Meaning, what colorblind television content leads to colorblind-blind orientations?
>
> RQ2: How is respectable ethnoracial prototypicality related to the two dimensions of color-blindness: color-evasion and power-evasion? Meaning, whose depiction leads to colorblind-blind orientations?

METHODS

METHODOLOGICAL RATIONALE

Since this dissertation is interested in relating Millennials' attitudes toward seeing color to their television practices (both in terms of consumption and reception), a quantitative audience approach is useful here. Historically, quantitative audience research (e.g., surveys, experiments) in media studies has been instrumental in investigating behaviors and attitudes and how these correlate to audiences' socio-demographic attributes – all to establish casual inferences and replicable findings. When research calls for rich and contextualized stories, perceptions, and/or desires, such understandings often fell under the purview of qualitative audience research. However, while the methodology of this dissertation is quantitative, the interpretation of its data is critical. It follows what Ang (2001) calls the *politics of interpretation*, where the researcher is no longer neutral and becomes a political and moral subject in its production of knowledge. What is found about audiences is therefore contextualized and historicized in order to discuss the cultural struggles between institutions and individuals over meanings and desires.

This dissertation has no formal theory to test but relies on post-raciality to frame and contextualize its findings. Its optimal objective is to tease/clear out ideological and discursive assumptions made about an audience segment. Quantitative methodology is helpful in this regard, as it offers a means of exploring the topic of seeing color and television holistically through (strength of) associations. Said differently, it helps answer: who does it reach, what does it say to them, and with what force? Results of this study also have the possibility of being replicated and generalized outside its context, although

it is not with a random sample, which makes that more difficult. This dissertation is careful in not reducing its audience to a collection of individuals, and instead treats participants as part of an interpretative community. In so doing, the focus shifts from representativeness of study findings to typicality (Barker, 2006), thus recognizing that not all audiences are equal and draw on various discursive resources to read media texts. Furthermore, through a language of likelihood and probabilities, this dissertation recognizes that its findings are provisional, contextual, and open to more interpretations (Ang, 2001).

There are methodological limitations that are noteworthy to consider in understanding audiences through a quantitative approach. Firstly, there is a risk of singularizing its sample into one audience, when there is no such thing as "the audience" but diverse audiences (Barker, 2006). Secondly, research tends to be passive and one-way. Meaning, the researcher(s) has an objective, detached role in its data collection. This lack of researcher-audience interaction hinders the listening that is gathered from informants (Schiappa, 2008). Lastly but not necessarily the last limitation, study findings could become the standard for an audience, when the hope is to create and continue discussions about post-raciality.

Setting the methodological limitations aside, this dissertation used a survey instrument to help answer its research inquiries. Most research on colorblind attitudes also utilized questionnaires on their research projects, which facilitates comparisons. The difference is that this study's focus is on television audiences. On top of this, it additionally stands out from other studies about color-blindness, audiences, and television

because it is not qualitative (Cooper, 2001; Kretsedemas, 2014). This deviation is intentional in order to diversify the topic through an assortment of methodological approaches.

DATA COLLECTION

Data for this study came from a convenience sample of university/college students. There are concerns over using student subjects in research. Among these are issues involving generalizability for relying on such a specific (non-representative) sample, as well as uncertainty given issues of internal consistency and external validity (Drukman & Kam, 2009; Peterson & Merunka, 2014). Even if undergraduate students are not generally the ideal research subjects, they happen to be for this dissertation project. Millennials are young (between the ages of 18 to 34) and are likely to attend/graduate post-secondary schools (Krogstad, 2016; White House Council of Economic Advisers, 2014).[2] In fact, about a third are college-educated (Doherty *et al*., 2015b). These characteristics are emblematic of college/university students today, thus validating the choice to use them for this research project.

Students who were enrolled in introductory media-oriented courses in a large southwestern university were recruited to answer a 25-40 minute online survey about their television use and the topic of race/ethnicity. Students received extra credit in the course for their research participation, which was approved by the Institutional Review

[2] The high school graduation rate of Millennials stood at 72% in 2011 – the highest completion rate in more than two decades (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2011). In 2013, 47% of young adults (25 to 34 year-olds) completed postsecondary education (e.g., associate, bachelor's, graduate degree) compared to 30% in 1992 (White House Council of Economic Advisers, 2014).

Board of the university. Students were sent an e-mail with the survey link in early November 2016. Students were reminded about the extra credit opportunity each week until the end of the semester.

Table 1 contains a demographic profile of the Millennials in the sample surveyed. Study participants were on average 19 years old (*SD* = 2), mostly women, a freshmen or a sophomore, self-identified as middle-class, leaned Democrat, and Texas born. Regarding their ethnoracial composition, participants were almost equally distributed in being either a member of the White majority or non-White minority. Of those belonging to an ethnoracial minority group, they were predominantly Asian or Latin@. This demographic profile is similar to that of the student population at large who was a registered student for Fall 2016 at the university: women (54.2%), White (39%), Hispanic (24%), Asian (24%), or majority Texas residents (90%).

Table 1. Demographics (*N* = 535)

		n	% of N
Gender	Men	227	42.4
	Women	306	57.1
	Other	2	4.0
Ethnorace	White	252	47.0
	Latin@	109	20.3
	Asian	122	22.8
	Black	23	4.3
	Other	27	5.0
Texas Born	No	208	38.8
	Yes	328	61.2
Austin is hometown	No	468	87.3
	Yes	68	12.7
Political Identification	Strong Democrat	117	21.8
	Weak Democrat	79	14.7
	Lean Democrat	99	18.5
	Independent	105	19.6

	Lean Republican	62	11.6
	Weak Republican	34	6.3
	Strong Republican	34	6.3
Social Class	Lower Class	16	3.0
	Lower-Middle Class	68	12.7
	Middle Class	186	34.7
	Upper-Middle Class	222	41.4
	Upper Class	44	8.2
Student Classification	Freshmen	169	31.5
	Sophomore	180	33.6
	Junior	109	20.3
	Senior	77	14.4

MEASURES

Unless otherwise noted, all items were randomized and used 7-point Likert-scales of agreement (1 = *Strongly Agree*, 7 = *Strongly Disagree*) or frequency (1 = *Never*, 7 = *Always*). Complete measures can be found in the Appendix.

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Color-blindness. Color-blindness is chiefly defined as a *color-evasion* or *power-evasion* attitude of seeing race and ethnicity (Awad & Jackson, 2015; Nevielle *et al*., 2013). When race and ethnicity are not important in defining oneself or others, one internalizes color-evasion racial-blindness. Ignoring race and ethnicity is meant to emphasize similarity and reject racial superiority, which can be seen as being tied to some of the Millennial attitudes discussed above. Rosenthal and Levy's (2012) 5-item measure of colorblindness assesses the importance of ethnicity and race in deriving identity meaning. Items such as, "At our core, all human beings are really all the same, so racial and ethnic categories do not matter," and "All human beings are individuals, and therefore race and ethnicity are not important," capture color-evasion racial-blindness

nicely. An index was created by averaging the five items together ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.32$), which were found to be reliable measure ($\alpha = 0.87$). Appendix A has the five items.

When race and ethnicity are dismissed as power-defining traits in social and political relations, one endorses power-evasion racial-blindness. The Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS) currently stand as the most robust measure of power-evasion racial-blindness (Awad & Jackson, 2016). Neville *et al*. (2000) constructed and validated (CoBRAS). Its 20 items render three related factors: unawareness of racial privilege (i.e., denying the existence of White privilege; seven items), denying the existence of institutional discrimination (i.e., awareness of institutional forms of racism; seven items), and blatant racial issues (i.e., unawareness of prevalent racial discriminations; six items). Example items include: "White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin" (Racial Privilege subscale); "Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people" (Institutional Discrimination subscale); and "Ethnic and racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations" (Blatant Racial Issues subscale). Each component was individually reliable and correlated strongly, so a composite measure of power-evasion racial blindness was created by averaging these three dimensions ($M = 4.81$, $SD = 0.88$). Appendix B has all items.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Colorblind television programming. The colorblind television screen welcomes and embraces increased numbers of characters of *color* in an attempt to recreate the sentiments of a post-racial era – one that does not factor in the intergroup conflict still

associated with race/ethnicity (Nielsen & Turner, 2014). On this note, television programs that include, feature, and direct attention to ethnoracial difference are strong candidates to characterize, endorse, and promote colorblindness. It can be as simple as featuring ethnoracial pluralism in its main characters or dedicating a TV show to members of an ethnoracial minority group (Beltrán, 2010a, 2013; Brook, 2009; Jhally & Lewis, 1992). This chapter examines three types of entertainment programs based on the ethnoracial diversity of their cast of main characters (Brook, 2009; Hunt *et al*., 2015, 2016): (a) *multicultural programming*: protagonists are dispersed across an assorted milieu of ethnoracial communities; (b) *minority-leading programming*: main characters skew to one-clearly defined ethnoracial minority group; (c) *White-dominant programming*: the ethnoracial group ratio of protagonists favor Whites with few main characters belonging to ethnoracial minority groups.

Seven television shows were chosen to represent each of the three types of colorblind programming highlighted above. These were selected upon reviewing Nielsen consumption and other open media reports that identified the top-ten television programs among youth (Nielsen, 2014, 2015, 2016; Hunt *et al*., 2015; Barna, 2015). Careful attention was paid in choosing TV shows across three entertainment genres of television that have been identified to include ethnoracial minorities: comedies, dramas, and reality television (Hunt *et al*., 2015, 2016; Signorelli, 2009). The Internet Movie Database (imdb.com) was consulted in order to determine the genre programs belonged to. Some entertainment programs had a hybrid genre known as dramedy; consequently, this genre was also included into the search. Only television shows airing during or after 2012 were

deemed appropriate and current for this study; the reason being that President Barack Obama—a canonical figure of post-racial America (Squires, 2014)—was re-elected, seen by many as an endorsement of a post-racial society, and continued his presidency for a second term. Lastly, part of the selection criteria was to include at least one television program that represented the three largest ethnoracial groups in the United States (Census, 2010): (a) Latin@, (b) Black, (c) Asian (both East and South Asians were considered in this study). The research rendered two comedies, two dramas, two dramedies, and one reality television show per category. Table 2 through 4 contains the relevant statistical (e.g., means, standard deviations, index reliability), demographical (e.g., the ethnoracial designation of main characters), and genre information of the each television show.

Television programs were assessed in two ways to ensure a note-worthy level of audience involvement with them. First, participants were asked to specify how many episodes of each television show they have watched (1 = *none*, 7 = *all aired episodes*). Secondly, participants were asked to disclose their level of familiarity with the narratives, themes, and characters of each television program. Two separate Principal Component Analyses[3] were performed on the 21 television shows: one for programming viewership and the other for participants' familiarity with them. Neither statistical test rendered a satisfactory three-factor solution that coincided with the three anticipated categories. For this reason, the television programs were categorized according to conceptual and theoretical assumptions over statistical ones. What this meant was that two separate

[3] A Principal Component Analysis is a statistical procedure meant to simplify a dataset as it identifies strong patterns (or underlying structures) based on the shared variation of items.

measures were created for each category of colorblind television content (i.e., multicultural, minority-leading, White-dominant) by separately averaging how much of a given program participants watched, or how familiar participants' were with each program. None of the two measures had statistically acceptable levels of reliabilities (.80 or better) but were close to that, with the Cronbach's alphas ranging from 0.58 to .70.

Television programs whose main characters belonged to different ethnoracial backgrounds were grouped under the multicultural programs. These were *America's Next Top Model* (CW, 2003—2015; VH1, 2016—), *Glee* (FOX, 2009—2015), *Grey's Anatomy* (ABC, 2005—), *Orange is the New Black* (Netflix, 2013—), *Parks & Recreation* (NBC, 2009—2015), *Superstore* (NBC, 2015—), and *The Walking Dead* (AMC, 2010—). Within this cohort, *Parks & Recreation*—a mockumentary type show that follows public officials as they make their town (Pawnee, Indiana) a better place—and *Orange is the New Black*—a drama-based show that portrays life at a federal women's prison—were the top two viewed and/or familiar television shows. Overall, based on the mean statistics and compared to the other types of colorblind television content, multicultural programs were the most viewed or familiar to participants.

Table 2. Multicultural television programming

	Genre	Viewership		Familiarity	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. *Parks & Recreation*	Comedy	3.72	2.54	3.99	2.55
2. *Orange is the New Black*	Dramedy	3.06	2.39	3.50	2.38
3. *Grey's Anatomy*	Drama	2.83	2.33	3.26	2.33
4. *Glee*	Dramedy	2.75	2.04	3.20	2.18
5. *The Walking Dead*	Drama	2.61	2.02	3.05	2.24
6. *America's Next Top Model*	Reality TV	2.53	1.88	2.99	2.13
7. *Superstore*	Comedy	1.44	1.27	1.59	1.46
Overall		2.71	1.13	3.08	1.32
Cronbach's alpha (α)		0.58		0.70	

Note. Sample of main characters' ethnoracial background:

1. Leslie Knope (White), April Ludgate (Latin@), Tom Haverford (South Asian), Donna Meagle (Black)
2. Piper Chapman (White), Suzanne Warren (Black), Lorna Morello (Latin@)
3. Meredith Gray (White), Callie Torres (Latin@), Cristina Yang (Asian)
4. Rachel Berry (White/Jew), Finn Hudson (White), Mercedes Jones (Black), Santana Lopez (Latin@), Tina Chang (Asian)
5. Rick Grimes (White), Michonne (Black), Glen Rhee (Asian), Rosita Espinosa (Latin@)
6. Winners: Keith Carlos (Cycle 21, Black), Lisa D'Amato (Cycle 17, Italian), Krista White (Cycle 14, Black), Jaslene Gonzalez (Cycle 8, Latin@)
7. Amy Dubanowski (née Sosa; Latin@), Johnah Simms (White), Garret McNeill (Black), Mateo Liwanag (Asian)

Television programs whose main characters belonged to one ethnoracial minority group were indexed as the minority-leading category. These were *Black-ish* (ABC, 2014—), *Devious Maids* (Lifetime, 2013—2016), *Empire* (FOX, 2015—), *Jane the Virgin* (CW, 2014—), *Masters of None* (Netflix, 2015—), *Narcos* (Netflix, 2015—), and Real Housewives of Atlanta (Bravo, 2008—). Programming with arguably brown casts were the top watched or most familiar for the current sample of Millennials. Comparatively and in general, minority-leading television programs were the least viewed or familiar to participants.

Table 3. Minority-leading television programming

	Genre	Viewership		Familiarity	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. *Jane the Virgin*	Comedy	2.47	2.22	2.73	2.31
2. *Narcos*	Drama	2.22	2.13	2.50	2.17
3. *Masters of None*	Dramedy	2.19	2.14	2.29	2.12
4. *Empire*	Drama	1.87	1.52	2.31	1.85
5. *Black-ish*	Comedy	1.84	1.58	2.17	1.83
6. *The Real Housewives – Atlanta*	Reality TV	1.51	1.26	1.79	1.52
7. *Devious Maids*	Dramedy	1.38	1.17	1.52	1.33
Overall		1.92	1.02	2.18	1.12
Cronbach's alpha (α)		0.66		0.67	

Note: Ethnoracial background of main characters:

1. Latin@: Jane Villanueva (Gina Rodriguez), Rogelio de la Vela (Jaime Camil), Rafael Solano (Justin Baldoni)
2. Latin@: Pablo Escobar (Wagner Moura). Javier Peña (Pedro Pascal), Tata Escobar (Paulna Gaitan)
3. South Asian: Dev Shah (Aziz Ansari), Brian Yang (Kelvin Yu)
4. Black: Loretha "Cookie" Lyon (Taraj P. Henson), Jamal Lyon (Jussie Smolett), Lucious Lyon (Terrence Howard)
5. Black: Dre Johnson (Anthony Anderson), Raibow Johnson (Tracee Ellis Ross)
6. Black: Nene Leakes, DeShawn Snow, Shereé Whitfield,
7. Latin@: Marisol Suarez (Ana Ortiz), Carmen Luna (Roselyn Sánchez), Zoila Diaz (Judy Reyes), Rosie Falta (Dania Ramiez)

Television programs with mostly White characters but that still featured a few ethnoracial minority actors in starring roles were grouped together as the White-dominant category. These included *Breaking Bad* (AMC, 2008—2013), *Dance Moms* (Lifetime, 2011—), *Desperate Housewives* (ABC, 2004—2012), *Modern Family*, *Parenthood* (ABC, 2009—), *Scandal* (ABC, 2012—), and *The Big Bang Theory* (CBS, 2007—). Only three TV shows averaged a moderate level of viewership or familiarity of three or higher: *Breaking Bad, The Big Bang Theory,* and *Modern Family.*

Table 4. White-dominant television programming					
	Genre	Viewership		Familiarity	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
1. *Breaking Bad*	Drama	3.18	2.46	3.41	2.41
2. *The Big Bang Theory*	Comedy	3.05	1.93	3.58	2.20
3. *Modern Family*	Comedy	3.05	1.93	3.57	2.18
4. *Scandal*	Drama	2.33	2.15	2.56	2.17
5. *Dance Moms*	Reality TV	2.15	1.73	2.42	1.96
6. *Desperate Housewives*	Dramedy	1.86	1.69	2.03	1.73
7. *Parenthood*	Dramedy	1.64	1.51	1.74	1.59
Overall		2.46	1.06	2.74	1.19
Cronbach's alpha (α)		0.61		0.67	

Note: Sample of main characters that are prominent ethnoracial minorities:

1. Gus Fring (Black)
2. Raj Koothrappali (South Asian)
3. Gloria Pritchett (Latin@)
4. Olivia Pope (Black)
5. Camille & Camryn (Black)
6. Gabrielle Solis (Latin@)
7. Jasmine Trussell-Braverman (Black)

As can be expected, viewership and familiarity of television programming correlated with another, and these were high correlations for each television category: multicultural programming ($r = .75$, $p < .001$), minority leading programming ($r = .81$, $p < .001$), and White-dominant programming ($r = .83$, $p < .001$). So, participants' knowledge of what these shows entail (e.g., who the main characters are, how their storylines play out, etc.), and their viewership of them, depend on each other. Due to this high correlation between the two measures, both were averaged together to create an index of program involvement for each separate category: multicultural programming ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 1.14$), minority leading programming ($M = 2.05$, $SD = 1.00$), and White-dominant programming ($M = 2.61$, $SD = 1.08$).

Exceptional television prototypicality. Exceptional depictions of ethnoracial groups are those that approximate the middle-class milieu of Whites (Doane, 2014; Griffin, 2015; Hughey, 2014; Ramírez Berg, 2002). Having said this, the Mainstream Values Scale (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006) is likely to capture the typical and attractive qualities associated with the social standing of the dominant White group. Participants were asked, "Think of the 'typical' depiction of an *ethnoracial group* on entertainment television, and then select the frequency to which they are depicted with these attributes: (a) educated, (b) intelligent, (c) rich, (d) self-supporting, (e) family-oriented, and (f) trustworthy." These adjectives were highly reliable across the four ethnoracial groups examined: Whites ($\alpha = 0.95$; $M = 5.06$, $SD = 1.01$), Latin@s ($\alpha = 0.80$; $M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.71$), Blacks ($\alpha = 0.90$; $M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.85$), and Asians ($\alpha = 0.90$; $M = 4.82$, $SD = 1.03$).

CONTROL VARIABLES

***Demographics*.** This study controlled for ethnorace, as it has been found to correlate to (power-evasive) color-blindness (Coleman, Chapman, & Wang, 2013; Nevielle *et al*., 2000, 2013). The reason being that ethnoracial minorities have been found to endorse colorblindness less than a White ethnoracial majority (Apollon, 2011; Ryan *et al*., 2007), given its dangerous ability to impact their racial identity development/maintenance or because of their own explicit/implicit experiences with racism.

Gender (1 = women, 0 = men) was also included as a control variable. Some studies found that gender correlated with color-blindness before other predictors of interest were added into the regression model (e.g., Coleman *et al*., 2013). Women may endorse colorblindness more so than men perhaps for its equality connotation, because racial equality means gender equality (Eddo-Lodge, 2014).

Subjective social position could influence Millennials' internalization of color-blind racial ideologies, since its acceptance may be dependent upon where one stands in society. It is likely that Millennials who feel comfortable in society—meaning, they see themselves on top, may be more likely to endorse mainstream attitudes. Respondents rated their subjective social status using the Scale of Subjective Status (Shaked, Williams, Evans, & Zonderman, 2016). Participants were instructed:

> Think of a ladder with 10 steps representing where people stand in the United States. At step 10 are people who are the best off – those who have the most money, the most education, and the most respected jobs. At step 1 are the people who are worst off – those who have the least money, least education, and the least respected jobs or no job. Where would you place yourself on this ladder?

The sample, on average, placed themselves above the mid-point ($M = 6.54$, $SD = 1.63$). As they are all students at a prestigious public university, that is not surprising.

Lastly, political identification has had a history of being linked to progressive/liberal ideologies and race is no exception. One study in particular (i.e., Burke, 2017) found no association between political location on ideology and colorblind attitudes. However, to continue the conversation about the discursive construction of the

liberal and culturally-open Millennial, political identification was added into the study's list of control variables. Participants were asked to identify their political party in one of the following categories: (1) Strong Democrat, (2) Weak Democrat, (3) Lean Democrat, (4) Independent, (5) Lean Republican, (6) Weak Republican, (7) Strong Republican.

Ethnoracial identity. Besides demographics, it is important to consider the role of one's identification and level of involvement with their ethnoracial identity. If colorblindness determines the relevance of ethnicity and/or race in post-racial society, then it should reflect in how people feel about their ethnoracial identities. Furthermore, colorblind attitudes have psychological implications on ethnoracial minorities such as discrediting their ethnoracial stress, what life satisfaction they could expect from their ethnic/racial membership, and if there is worth in community building (Apollon, 2011; Bell, 2016; Coleman *et al*., 2013). Two domains of ethnic identity are examined here: (1) importance to self-concept and (2) public self-esteem. Both measures were obtained from the Race-specific Collective Self-esteem Scale (or CSES-R, Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994), which evaluates the socio-psychological importance of one's ethnoracial identity to them. The importance to self-concept dimension examines how much does an ethnoracial identity means to them as an identity category (e.g., "The ethnic or racial group I belong to is an important reflection of who I am."). The private self-esteem dimension considers the extent to which others evaluate their ethnoracial group (e.g., "In general, others respect the ethnic or racial group that I am a member of"). Both four-item measures were reliable here: importance to self-concept ($\alpha = 0.84$; $M =$

4.13, *SD* = 1.42) and public self-esteem (α = 0.86; *M* = 4.70, *SD* = 1.36). Appendix C has all items

Watching television. One other television construct that can influence colorblindness is television consumption. If television is shifting toward a color-inclusive medium (Nilsen & Turner, 2014), and if television affects ethnoracial attitudes (Gorham, 1999), then it is possible that the mere act of watching television may be enough to impact perceptions about colorblindness. On a five-point Likert scale (1 = about once a day; 5 = never), participants were instructed to report their television viewership across several genres (Lee, Bichard, Irey, Wal, & Carlson, 2009): (a) entertainment (e.g., comedies. Music television, movies on television, late night talk shows), (b) dramas (e.g., drama, emergency drama, crime drama), (c) informational (e.g., local and national news), (d) educational (e.g., PBS, nature programs, game shows such as *Jeopardy* and *Wheel of Fortune*), (e) reality (e.g., reality shows and news magazines), (f) melodrama/soap opera (e.g., daytime programs), (g) sports (e.g., sports coverage). Two additional genres were added based on their popularity among Americans and young adults: (g) anime/cartoons/animation (Kissell, 2015) and (i) action adventure (Nielsen, 2013). All items formed a reliable index of television viewership (α = 0.75; *M* = 3.28, *SD* = 0.69).

RESULTS

It is important to first examine what television practices the current sample of Millennials did have with colorblind content. Generally, their viewership and familiarity with either multicultural, minority-leading, or White-dominant television programming was rather low to moderate. These consumption patterns can be expected, since Millennials report watching television less than other, older age generations (Verizon, 2014). However, the TV shows that stood out in this study matched those that previous media reports identified as popular among Millennials (Barna, 2015). These were *Orange is the New Black, Parks & Recreation, Breaking Bad,* and *The Big Bang Theory*. No demographic group differences existed in regards to subjective social class, but ethnoracial minority Millennials tended to watch more of minority-leading TV programs (r = -.16, p < .001) than the White ethnoracial majority. Moreover, men tended to watch more of multicultural TV programming (r = .29, p < .001) than women. In terms of respectable television representations of ethnoracial groups, those perceived about Whites were the highest and the lowest were found for Blacks. Ethnoracial group membership (higher for Whites; r = .11, p < .05) and gender (higher for men; r = -.10, p < .05) were important in noticing respectable portrayals of Latin@. Gender was also a pertinent factor in observing the respectable prototypicality of Whites (higher for women; r = .10, p < .05). Overall, Millennials were fairly homogenous on their colorblind content. However, the aforementioned group differences may impact the linear regression models because these rest on the assumption that scores have similar fluctuation patterns, and if scores are uneven and widely dispersed, then no linear correlation can be estimated.

Zero-order bivariate correlations were conducted to first examine the general associations between control, independent, and dependent variables. Results are presented in Table 5. The dignified television prototypicality of all four ethnoracial groups was associated to both dimensions of color-blindness. However, the prototypicality of Latin@s and Blacks correlated negatively to color-blindness and the one pertaining to Whites and Asians had a positive correlation to either dimension. Color-blind programming had no statistical correlations to color-evasion racial-blindness, and only two types of shows—multicultural and minority-leading television—were positively related to power-evasion racial blindness. Participant demographics and their ethnoracial identity also demonstrated statistically significant correlations with color-blindness, particularly its power-evasion dimension. Based on these associations, it is evident that most variables in this study are significant contributors of color-evasion and power-evasion racial-blindness, and in order to examine which one best explains and predicts them, two hierarchical linear regressions were carried out.

Table 5. Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations between Study 1 Main Variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(1) Ethnoracial Group (1 = White)	—						
(2) Gender (1 = Women)	.04	—					
(3) Subjective Social Status	.34***	.02	—				
(4) Political Identification	.22***	-.10*	.13**	—			
(5) Importance to Self-concept	-.42***	.15***	-.16***	-.09*	—		
(6) Public Self-esteem	.31***	.00	.16***	.07	-.16***	—	
(7) Television Viewership	.01	.13**	-.03	-.05	.02	.09*	—
(8) W Exceptional Prototypicality	-.06	.10*	.03	-.12**	.11*	.00	.10*
(9) L Exceptional Prototypicality	.11*	-.10*	-.01	.10*	-.11*	.12**	-.05
(10) B Exceptional Prototypicality	.06	-.07	-.06	.04	-.02	.07	-.04
(11) A Exceptional Prototypicality	-.07	.02	-.03	-.07	.12***	.07[b]	-.01
(12) Multicultural	.03	.29***	-.04	-.21***	-.02	-.10*	-.09*
(13) Minority-learning	-.16***	.09[b]	-.07	-.16**	.07	-.19***	-.23***
(14) White-dominant	.07	.08	.03	.00	-.04	-.04	-.25***
(15) Color-Evasion	-.17***	.18***	-.04	-.15**	.29***	-.05	.13**
(16) Power-Evasion	-.16***	.18***	-.09*	-.57***	.19***	-.11*	.09*
α	—	—	—	—			
M	—	—	6.54	3.29	4.13	4.70	3.28
SD	—	—	1.63	1.80	1.42	1.36	0.69

Note: W = White, L = Latin@, B = Black, A = Asian; ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$, [a]$p \leq .06$, [b]$p \leq .10$

Table 5. Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations between Study 1 Main Variables (Cont'd)

	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
(1) Ethnoracial Group (1= White)									
(2) Gender (1 = Women)									
(3) Subjective Social Status									
(4) Political Identification									
(5) Importance to Self-concept									
(6) Public self-esteem									
(7) Television Viewership									
(8) W Exceptional Prototypicality	—								
(9) L Exceptional Prototypicality	-.02	—							
(10) B Exceptional Prototypicality	.53***	.60***	—						
(11) A Exceptional Prototypicality	.06	.17***	.09[b]	—					
(12) Multicultural	-.19***	-.02	.04	.10*	—				
(13) Minority-learning	-.05	.00	-.06	.07	.58***	—			
(14) White-dominant	-.09[a]	.01	.04	-.04	.56***	.55***	—		
(15) Color-Evasion	.18***	-.13**	-.11*	.14**	.05	.02	-.04	—	
(16) Power-Evasion	.32***	-.13**	-.16***	.21***	.26***	.15**	-.02	.33	—
α									
M	5.06	3.59	3.44	4.82	2.90	2.06	2.61	4.23	4.81
SD	1.01	0.71	0.85	1.03	1.14	1.00	1.08	1.32	0.88

Note: W = White, L = Latin@, B = Black, A = Asian; ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$, [a]$p \leq .06$, [b]$p \leq .10$

Table 6 and 7 contain the results for the two hierarchical regressions on color-blindness. Participants' demographics were entered in block 1 (step 1), followed by their ethnic identity affinity (step 2), then by television viewership (step 3), proceeded by dignified television prototypicality (step 4), and lastly by color-blind television engagement (step 5).

RQ1: COLOR-BLIND TELEVISION PROGRAMMING ON COLOR-BLINDNESS

To answer the first research question, color-blind television programming appears to be more relevant in power-evasion than on color-evasion racial-blindness. Yet, out of all the examined color-blind television shows, only involvement with multicultural programming ($\beta = .15$, $p < .01$) was statistically significant on power-evasion racial blindness. So, watching and being familiar with TV programs that feature heteronomous ethnoracial characters are likely to be associated with higher (colorblind) attitudes about ethnicity/race not defining opportunities for people. None of the color-blind TV programs predicted color-evasion racial-blindness, however. Based on these results, there is some indication to infer that colorblind television programming, particularly that with multicultural casts, has a deeper ideological function in dismissing race/ethnicity in structural/institutional/societal terms ("no bias exists for ethnoracial groups") over colorblind forms emphasize sameness ("we are all human").

Table 6. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Predictor Variables of Color-Evasion Racial Blindness ($N = 421$)

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Block 1: Demographics					
Ethnoracial Group	-.15**	-.06	-.06	-.05	-.06
Gender	.15**	.13**	.11*	.11*	.09b
Subjective Social Status	.04	.02	.03	.01	.02
Political Identification	.04	-.05	-.05	-.04	-.02
Block 2: Ethnic Identity					
Importance to Self-concept		.21***	.21***	.19***	.20***
Public self-esteem		.00	-.01	-.02	-.02
Block 3: Television Viewership					
General			.13**	.12*	.11*
Block 4: Exceptional TV Prototypicality					
White				.05	.04
Latin@				-.04	-.03
Black				-.06	-.07
Asian				.11a	.10b
Block 5: Color-blind TV Programming					
Multicultural					.09
Minority-learning					-.06
White-dominant					-.03
ΔR^2	4.8%***	3.6%***	1.7%**	2.2%*	0.4%
R^2	4.8%	8.4%	10.1%	12.3%	12.7%
df	(4, 417)	(6, 415)	(7, 414)	(11, 410)	(14, 407)
F	5.28***	6.37***	6.63***	5.22***	4.24***

Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$, [a]$p \leq .06$, [b]$p \leq .10$

RQ2: RESPECTABLE TELEVISION PROTOTYPICALITY ON COLOR-BLINDNESS

Regarding the second research question, the dignified prototypicality of ethnoracial groups on television only statistically contributed to power-evasion racial blindness but not on its companion dimension. Specifically, the more Whites ($\beta = .15$, $p < .001$) or Asians ($\beta = .09$, $p = .05$) were perceived to embody respectable and mainstream character qualities (e.g., trustworthy, educated, intelligent) on television, the higher their attitudes about denying racism were. The opposite can be expected with the dignified televisuality of Blacks ($\beta = -.17$, $p < .001$). The positive prototypicality of Latin@s ($\beta = .05$, $p > .05$) did not predict power-evasion racial-blindness, even if both were negatively related ($r = -.13$, $p < .01$). It is probable that the dignified Latin@ prototypicality failed to predict power-evasion racial-blindness because there were ethnoracial and gender differences in this characterization among Millennials, when the perception of other ethnoracial groups was rather homogenous. What can be gathered from these statistics is that the dignified televisual prototypicality of ethnoracial groups has a similar predictive pattern on color-blind attitudes like that observed with color-blind television programming: an association with power-evasive over color-evasive forms of race(ism).

Table 7. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Predictor Variables of Power-Evasion Racial Blindness ($N = 415$)

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Block 1: Demographics					
Ethnoracial Group	-.02	.04	.04	.06	.06
Gender	.12**	.11*	.09*	.09*	.05
Subjective Social Status	-.02	-.01	-.01	-.04	-.03
Political Identification	-.55***	-.55***	-.55***	-.53***	-.49***
Block 2: Ethnic Identity					
Importance to Self-concept		.13**	.13**	.12**	.13**
Public self-esteem		-.03	-.04	-.05	-.04
Block 3: Television Viewership					
General			.09*	.06	.05
Block 4: Exceptional TV Prototypicality					
White				.15**	.15***
Latin@				.05	.05
Black				-.16***	-.17***
Asian				.11*	.09 p =.05
Block 5: Color-blind TV Programming					.15**
Multicultural					.02
Minority-learning					-.08
White-dominant					
ΔR^2	33.2%***	1.5%*	0.7%*	6.9%***	2.5%*
R^2	33.2%	34.7%	35.4%	42.3%	43.6%
df	(4, 411)	(6, 409)	(7, 408)	(11, 404)	(14, 401)
F	50.98***	36.13***	31.89***	26.91***	22.16***

Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$, [a]$p \leq .06$, [b]$p \leq .10$

The results of this study suggest that color-blind television content contributes to their color-blind attitudes of Millennials. However, we should be cautions not to over-extend the study findings, since the statistical impact of colorblind-content did not overshadow that of other predictors. All included predictors explained a combined 12.7% of the observed variance on color-evasion racial-blindness, with dignified prototypicality only contributing 2.2% (ΔR^2) and colorblind programming another 0.4% (ΔR^2) of the total variance. Both of their contributions were non-significant in the regression model. Regarding power-evasion racial-blindness, its final regression model had an observed variance of 43.6%, with demographics significantly explaining most it (33.2%). Dignified prototypicality and colorblind programming each statistically contributed an additional percentage of the total variance on power-evasion racial-blindness: 6.9% and 2.5% respectively. Such observations direct our attention to other factors such as audience demographics or call attention to television depictions that typify (or not) ethnoracial groups that can better explain the relationship.

OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS ON COLOR-BLINDNESS

Out of the examined media-related variables in this study, watching television was the only significant predictor of color-evasive racial-blindness. The association was positive ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$), which meant that participants who watched less television across several genres were more likely to endorse ethnoracial attitudes of sameness. This statistic (as well as the rest in this regression model) points to factors outside television

that are more helpful for Millennials to believe in humanism. Consequently, the value of television in matters of colorblindness is not at the interpersonal level but at the structural one, since its (colorblind) content was likely to predict power-evasive color-blindness.

One constant and positive predictor of color-blindness was the importance of participants' ethnic identity on their self-concept. With colorblindness de-emphasizing the significance or race(ism), it would seem that those who hold their ethnic identities in high-esteem would be cautious about internalizing ideologies that threaten and lessen the socio-cultural worth of ethnicity and/or race. This study found the opposite. Statistical results suggest that Millennials' who considered their ethnoracial important to who they are were more likely to internalize color-evasive ($\beta = .20$, $p < .001$) or power evasive racial-blindness ($\beta = .13$, $p < .01$). What participants' felt others thought of their ethnoracial identity had no effect on their color-blind attitudes (color-evasion, $\beta = -.02$, $p > .05$; power-evasion, $\beta = -.04$, $p > .05$).

Political identification only predicted power-evasive racial-blindness. Specifically, Millennials who skew Democratic in their political identification ($\beta = -.49$, $p < .001$) tended to dismiss how ethnicity and/or race inform social and cultural (dis)advantages. This finding is particularly contradictory to expectations of who is colorblind, especially on matters about structural and institutional inequalities. Results like this and the aforementioned one about ethnic identity identify the current sample of Millennials as atypical, or perhaps as ideological complacent to colorblindness.

DISCUSSION

This study has examined how colorblind television (statistically) related to colorblindness among a sample of Millennials. It found a complimentary association; meaning that color inclusion onscreen can translate into post-racial attitudes. However, the contribution of this study to post-raciality was in clarifying what programming and whose portrayals facilitate the socialization process. It finds that color has significance even in its absence or dismissal in mediated contexts (Chidester, 2008; Nayak, 2006; Pinder, 2015). Specifically, for this young audience, the colorblind screen is of particular relevance in cultivating a power-evasive colorblind stance, and multicultural programming and the respectable portrayals of Whites as well as those of Asians are instrumental in carrying it out. So, not only do cultural texts match the societal contexts in which these are produced and circulated (Gray, 2004; Hughey, 2014), but there are also contradictions in them—in this case, a violation of color neutrality—that sets a dominant social frame that still differentiates against color and its racial meaning. The preceding discussion attempts to parse out the conflicted and successful state of post-raciality/color-blindness in one of its prime demographics: Millennials.

Interestingly, Millennials here did not exemplify the characteristics of people who are believed to consider race(ism) insignificant. (1) *Ethnoracial majority* (Apollon, 2011): ethnic membership was not significant in both regression models. (2) *Low-identifying ethnoracial individuals*: contrarily, those who hold their ethnoracial identities in higher regards to their self-concept were more likely to be colorblind across its two

dimensions. (3) *Liberal* (Pew Research Center, 2016): political identification was non-significant only for color-evasion colorblindness (Burke, 2017) but relevant in its power-evasion dimension (those leaning Democratic). Such demographic patterns contradict general assumptions of who is likely to reject colorblindness (Bell, 2006; Coleman *et al*., 2013; Neville et al., 2013), yet are in accordance with market research that renders Millennials colorblind (MTV, 2014). This (a)typicality nicely captures the ambivalence that youth in the U.S. experience under a prevailing ethic or expectation of post-raciality: a desire to look beyond race(ism) but still hold on to their ethnoracial identities. Now, it is possible that these observances are due to the region and school of where data was collected. As will be further elaborated in Chapter 4, the sample comes from a generally progressive city (Austin, Texas), and students attended a premiere-public university. This combination of factors makes it likely that participants are privileged not only in terms of class but also for residing in a tolerant and politically progressive space.

WATCHING TELEVISION, ONSCREEN DIVERSITY, AND COLOR-BLINDNESS

Multicultural television programming functions as a type of entertaining anti-racism for Millennials. The reason being, as Müller (2009) argues, the presence of color on screen is meant to foster pro-social attitudes for ethnic/racial Others, thanks to the positive intercultural relations evident in these TV shows. In multicultural programming, like most TV shows featuring ethnic/racial diversity, color is meant to affirm cross-ethnic/racial universality and cooperation, minimizing the competition for cultural power

and resources (Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014; Hughey, 2014). The absence of racism means things are fine; that racial indignities are a thing of the past (Jhally & Lewis, 1992; Innis & Feagin, 1995). By erasing the cultural disadvantage of ethnic/racial minorities, the focus can now be shifted to the realm of the personal and sameness. The apolitical inclusion of color in multicultural TV shows thus facilitates the convergence of difference (Brook, 2009), ensuring the harmonious congregation of distinct ethnoracial groups and the perception that all characters are allocated proper and meaningful space in the narratives. These cultural texts are also cultivating culture-blindness (Kretsedemas, 2014), where we transcend the peculiarities of cultural and ethnic identities of characters to privilege the universal. At the end of the day, the positive relationship between multicultural programing and power-evasion color-blindness is indicative that ethnoracial relations in these cultural texts shy away from discussing and cultivating a perception about the structural and institutional factors that enable unequal distributions of symbolic and cultural resources.

It appears multicultural programming is creating a new standard of what can count as colorblind progression on television (Beltrán, 2010a; Molina-Guzmán, 2013; Ryan, 2016; Vega, 2013). The previous titleholders were TV shows with exclusive or casts mostly comprised of ethnoracial minorities given their breakthrough presence in a White television era (Gray, 2004; Jhally & Lewis, 1992). Since minority-leading or white-dominant TV shows did not predict color-blindness, these findings illustrate the shifting taste for media content that is in tune with the demographic changes of its young audience. Or, the realization that the social world is not black and white anymore but

multi-ethnic/racial, thus encouraging the visibility of several groups that capture ethnoracial difference. The take-away is: Minority-leading and White-dominant programming are possibly becoming too commonplace on television, hence forcing content producers to innovate in how ethnic/racial difference is (re)presented onscreen.

It could also be that minority-leading programming is not *ethnic* enough, racially inauthentic, or too assimilated to produce a vantage point that sufficiently contrasts dominant culture (Gray, 2004; Innis & Feagin, 1995; Markert, 2007). Similarly, this essence of experiencing color is lacking from White-dominant TV shows. The possibility exists that the ethnoracial minority characters in these cultural texts are un-raced, meaning their actions are taken outside an ethnic/racial context to that of universality (Hughey, 2014; Kretsedemas, 2014; Molina-Guzmán, 2013). Alternatively, the insignificant correlation between both programming to color-blindness may indicate that these are fostering a color-conscious attitude. Color clearly stands out in them, thus bringing ethnoracial difference to the forefront (Molina-Guzmán, 2012).

EXCEPTIONAL COLOR AND COLOR-BLINDNESS

Exceptional portrayals of Whites or Asians on television were likely to (positively) predict power-evasion color-blindness. The ethnoracial group attached to these respectable/mainstream depictions can explain the associations. Whiteness, unlike other ethnoracial groups, escapes its *color* and can remain colorless across multiple contexts (Chidester, 2008; Hughey, 2014; Pinder, 2015; Shome, 2000), and as a typically un-marked ethnoracial group, those associated with it are not necessarily constrained to the

social meanings of its color. That is to say, White media figures are just people, individuals, and defined by personality or character instead of how they measure up to the rest of their ethnoracial group (Dyer, 1997; Hughey, 2014; Ortega & Feagin, 2016). The exceptional characterization of White people is therefore individualized and illustrates that *color* has nothing to do with success. This *racialized* meaning toward individual effort matches the power-evasion color-blind attitude that disavows societal bias and favors meritocracy. Asians enter this thinking thanks to their model minority status, which grants them honorary Whiteness (Ono & Pham, 2009). Even if Asians have color, their actions resemble or are prototypical of Whiteness, thus helping them transcend the peculiarities of color. In fact, the portrayals of exceptional Whites were only and strongly correlated to that of Asians ($r = .53$, $p < .001$), further attesting to some similarity.

Exceptional blackness—in this study, the televisuality of blacks according to how they embody mainstream values—appears not to resonate with color-blindness as it did before (Jhally & Lewis, 1992). Multiple explanations exist for this divergent finding. First, images of Black people in the media have been consistently met with ambivalence and suspicion, more so from ingroup members (Innis & Feagin, 1995; Moody, 2014). Secondly, it is likely that these images are still raced, thus priming cognitions and emotions that make its *color* apparent. Thirdly, this exceptional image continues is still unrepresentative of the oppressive reality that Black people face today. It is likely that this black image, if anything, inspires color-consciousness.

Noticing the televisibility of exceptional Latin@s was not enough to predict color-blindness, even though both negatively correlated. It is possible that this finding was due to the sample of Millennials not having similar perceptions of Latin@s as they did for the other ethnoracial groups. The regression model therefore did not estimate a prediction line, given the amount of dispersion. Or, the result was due to the typicality of other ethnoracial groups statistically outweighing that of Latin@s. Looking at their, it is evident that respectable Latinidad has a strong and shared correlations with exceptional Blackness ($r = .60$, $p < .001$), a with one with exceptional Asianness ($r = .17$, $p < .001$), and none with respectable Whiteness. From these statistical associations, it is evident that noticing exceptional Latin@s relies on how other ethnoracial minority groups embody this characterization on television too and vise-versa. But when it comes to color-blindness, in these results, exceptional Latin@s take an in-between state similar to its construction in the social imaginary (Beltrán, 2009; Goin, 2016; Dávila, 2012; Molina-Guzmán, 2010): neither light enough to be absolved from racism like Whites, or dark enough to be recipients of aversive racism like Blacks.

CHAPTER 3. Color-consciousness and symbolic color differences: Seeing onscreen marginality

Competing myths about ethnoracial groups exist in the images that television circulates, and at times, even within the same cultural text. This is the result of the inconsistent symbolic treatment mostly observed with ethnoracial minorities across media, where we have exceptional ethnoracial group members (e.g., doctors, lawyers, business owners, etc.), alongside less respectable ingroup fellows (e.g., drug dealers, clowns, welfare dependents, etc.). For media audiences, these contradictory images create ambivalence regarding what acceptability these ethnoracial groups have in mainstream culture (Iniss & Feagin, 1995; Mok, 1998; Rojas, 2004; Vargas, 2009). The tension in these polarized and conflicted depictions directs attention to color, whether it is to acknowledge or ignore it (Cooper, 1998; Hughey, 2014; Moody, 2014). The argument here is that the increased production of colorblind content muddles people's ethnoracial meanings into de-centralizing race/ethnicity from their media practices. However, the long historical and marginal treatment of ethnoracial minorities as the cultural Other—those who are not part of the norm—makes it likely that color remains part of how people derive pleasure from media (hooks, 1992; Valdivia, 1998). They may resist the post-racial mystique, which encourages racial amnesia (Squires, 2014), through a color-conscious approach to race(ism). So, in a social world striving for color-blindness, it leads to the question: Have audiences forgotten about color and its symbolic place in television?

This study is interested in the relationship between onscreen ethnoracial marginality and color-consciousness. It holds that the decade-long and negative stereotypes of ethnoracial groups on television are difficult to forget and destabilize (Alsultany, 2012; Molina-Guzmán, 2010), and that an awareness of race(ism) can translate into noticing and assigning meaning to the televisibility of color. Such a claim contrasts with post-racial thinking, as discussed above, since color is still a source of stigma and stress for disenfranchised groups (Coleman *et al*., 2013; Loury, 2005). Similar to Chapter 2, this chapter examines the relationship between ethnoracial televisibility and color-consciousness. Of interest is onscreen marginality and *what* negative prototypicality and whose is able to encourage critical assessments of color.

TELEVISION PRESENCE OF ETHNORACIAL GROUPS: A GLANCE

Out of all ethnoracial groups, Whites have had a relatively stable presence on television for decades, in proportions surpassing their US census figures. Recent content analytic research showed that across 12 television seasons broadcasted between 1987 to 2009, White characters had at least 80% of visibility during this time span (Tukachinsky, Mastro, & Yarchi, 2015). This prominent televisibility translates into representation diversity for Whites onscreen; meaning, they are not restricted to certain emotions, occupations, or genres. This is not to say that Whites are free from typification. Some tropes remain constant, such as the hero-savior complex (Griffin, 2015; Hughey, 2014; Ortega & Feagin, 2016; Ramirez-Berg, 2002). Not only are White characters empathetic and relatable compared to non-White characters, but these characters are also the most

sympathetic and identifiable to audiences for being noble, attractive, affluent, capable, rational, intelligent, educated, and career-oriented among other respectable traits (Chidester, 2008; Dyer, 1997). The only exception is arguably White trash – a marginal form of Whiteness (Merskin, 2011). The conclusion still is: Whites have a symbolic advantage in terms of quantity and quality of television portrayals over ethnoracial minorities.

The media presence of ethnoracial minorities is less encouraging than those of Whites. Based on content analytic media research, ethnoracial minorities, mostly Blacks and Latin@s, are expected in sitcoms and criminal dramas on television (Signorielli, 2009). Other reports have found that ethnic minorities are more likely to lead/star in reality television than scripted programming (Hunt *et al*., 2015). Within entertainment television, Blacks are typically fools, ghetto queens, and drug dealers among others (Bounds Littlefield, 2008; Entman & Rojecki, 2001; Gray, 2004), while Latin@s are often seen as maids/gardeners, lawbreakers, and immigrants to name few (Frances-Negron *et al*., 2014; Valdivia, 2010). Non-fictional media even relies on these depictions to tell stories about ethnoracial minorities. The news oftentimes focuses on, and over-represents, Black criminality (Campbell, 2016; Entman & Rojecki, 2001), the Latin@ immigrant threat (Chavez, 2008), or frames ethnoracial minorities under the themes of drugs, violence, poverty, government dependence, big families, and linguistic or intellectual incompetence (Larson, 2006).

Even with the recent slight increase of television series and films that feature ethnoracial minorities actors/characters as protagonist (GLAAD, 2015; Hunt *et al*., 2015;

Santhanam & Crigger, 2015), these are not enough to offset the historical tropes, traits, and portrayals that still accompany ethnoracial minorities. On the contrary, these optimistic images run the risk of verifying previously held stereotypes, as these favorable portrayals may not be seen as representative of the social group(s). Content analytic work, for instance, has found that sensuality is a common trait for Latin@s in mainstream television (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005) – a characteristic that has been increasing since the late 80s (Tukachinski *et al*., 2015). Today, Latin@ characters not adhering to this image could be casted as inauthentic for lacking the group's presumed flavor and sexuality. The takeaway is, despite new television content gradually including more ethnoracial diversity in counter-stereotypical roles, the old stereotypes still persist in viewers' minds (Entman & Rojecki, 2001; Mastro 2009; Merskin, 2011).

DEFINING ONSCREEN ETHNORACIAL MARGINALITY

The incongruous presence and essence of ethnoracial groups on televisual suggest that symbolic inequalities exist. Consequently, Chapter 3 is interested in the association between television and ethnic/racial Otherness as they relate to seeing color. Their relationship is best examined through onscreen marginality – a concept meant to capture the less significant, (hyper)visible, and inauspicious televisual presence of ethnoracial minorities. The assumption comes from ethnoracial minorities being the carriers of Otherness, typically defined outside Whiteness, and casted to peripheries in the media (Alsultany, 2012; Campbell, 2016; Goin, 2016; Gorham, 1999; Hall, 2001b; Merskin, 2011). Onscreen marginality consequently identifies and makes-sense of the historical

and popular ethnic/racial stereotypes—one-dimensional, concretized signs of Otherness (Goin, 2016; Merskin, 2011)— that represses and disadvantages ethnoracial minorities on television.

Onscreen marginality is an important concept to explore and develop further, because it has the potential of encapsulating the fears, anxieties, and threats imposed on ethnic/racial groups. Onscreen marginality therefore functions as a subtle and mediated form of cultural racism (Bounds Littlefield, 2008; Bonilla-Silva, 2014) that do nothing but harm the public image and social imagination of ethnoracial groups. The myths—or the ideologies behind narratives, characterizations, and dialogue (Campbell, 2016)—are the primary culprits in symbolically colonizing ethnoracial groups into Otherness (Molina-Guzmán, 2010). Undeniably, onscreen marginality is a loaded, ideological construct about the televisuality of ethnic/racial difference. Yet, these visualizations of color start with the image, or the *negative* televisibility of ethnoracial groups. Group prototypicality can be a good start in operationalizing the television presence of onscreen marginality,

WHAT IS PROTOTYPICALITY, AND WHY DOES IT MATTER ON MEDIA AUDIENCES?

Self-categorization theory (SCT) describes the cognitive processes that inform social identities over personal identities (Turner, 1985, 1987). Both identities are antagonistic to each other on a continuum, separated by levels of abstraction (Oaks, 2003). While idiosyncratic characteristics drive personal identities, social identities are

established through self-perceived group features that encompass a given category (i.e., ingroup prototypes – a set of characteristics that are emblematic of a category; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1985; Hogg & McGarty, 1990). Once a social identity becomes salient, this self-identification dilutes one's unique features so a collective self-concept takes precedence. Group categorization is essentially based on the degree to which one assimilates to ingroup prototypes, which in turn, simultaneously serve to differentiate one's group against others (Hogg, 1992). This group differentiation process enables the opportunity to bolster one's self-concept and self-esteem. Groups, thus, strive to adopt favorable and advantageous ingroup prototypes in order to inferiorly assess outgroups on these attributes (Hogg & McGarty, 1990). Nevertheless, prototypes must be widely shared concepts in order to work as comparative social benchmarks (Hogg & William, 2000). Just as prototypes are descriptive, they too are prescriptive, dictating attitudes, emotions, perceptions, and actions (Hogg & Hains, 1996). Social perceptions are therefore depersonalized through self-categorization and others are not processed according to their unique attributes but rather on their embodiment of a group prototype (Hogg, 1992; Hogg & Hains, 1996).

Evaluating group prototypes among audiences has been useful in media research. Such work suggests that outgroup celebrities who closely embody ingroup prototypes are socially attractive (Mastro, Tamborini, & Hullett, 2005), ingroup prototypicality of media characterizations predicts race-based policy reasoning (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006), favorable outgroup prototypicality congruently renders positive outgroup perceptions (Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2011), and ingroup prototypes have been associated with

individual and collective self-esteem among ingroups (Mora & Kang, 2016). Ultimately, the research links media prototypicality of groups with racial judgments, outgroup affinity, and identity needs such as self-esteem. The next question is what prototypicality are ethnoracial groups framed under in their media depictions.

THE MEDIA PROTOTYPICALITY OF ETHNORACIAL GROUPS

Defining media prototypes of ethnoracial groups requires a careful examination of the characterizations that have personified them across mediated contexts. Mainstream values prototypicality and criminality prototypicality are two widely used measures that conceptualize group traits that typify ethnoracial minorities and a White majority social group on television and film (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006; Tan, Fujioka, & Tan, 2000). The criminality measure is emblematic of the behaviors that depict Latin@s and Blacks as lawbreakers and criminal deviants: (a) violence, crime, dealing drugs, and using drugs. Conversely, the mainstream value measure represents those characteristics that are often associated with mainstream (White) characters: (a) educated, (b) intelligent, (c) rich, (d) self-supporting, (e) family oriented, and (f) trustworthy. Media research has used these scales to understand Latin@s' ingroup media perceptions (Mora & Kang, 2016) or the perceptions of White audiences of ethnoracial minorities (Ramasubramanian, 2010).

There is room to amplify the prototypicality of ethnoracial groups in the media. Ethnoracial minorities are continuously depicted with historical tropes and roles that both essentialize and homogenize these groups (Gray, 2004; Ono & Pham, 2009; Valdivia, 2010). Given the presumed sexiness that is found in dark-skin and voluptuous bodies

(Allisson, 2016; Manatu, 2003), sexuality is one fruitful avenue to analyze the prototypicality of ethnoracial minorities. The under-representation of ethnoracial minorities in general media has been thoroughly documented (Monk-Turner, Helserman, Johnson, Cotton, & Jackson, 2010; Tukachinski *et al*., 2015). Such work also suggests that when visible, ethnoracial minorities are not typically leading characters, but if they are, they often are the antagonists or troublemakers of the narrative. Consequently, another crucial domain in which investigate the media representation of ethnoracial groups is role prototypicality. Both sexuality prototypicality and role prototypically of ethnoracial groups in the media are further discussed below.

Scholars interested in media images of women have extensively focused on their sexual objectification and sexuality (Allison, 2016; Molina-Guzmán, 2010; Parreñas Schimizu, 2007). Content analytic research–whether it be in the form of tallying depictions or rhetorical criticism of media texts–concludes that images of women are submissively sexualized in more social contexts and manners than men (Collins, 2011; Coltrane & Messineo, 2000), corroborating the notion that women are the objects (not the processors) of a sexual gaze (see Mulvey, 1975). Other work takes a more specific approach, comparing the appearance, attraction, clothing, and corporal depictions of women across ethnic groups in American media. It has been found that Black women in music videos are more likely than White women to wear provocative clothing (Turner, 2011), but no statistical differences existed in character weight differences between Black and White women onscreen (Zhang, Dixon, & Conrad, 2010). In magazine advertising during a ten-year span (1885-1994), Black women wore the majority of animal prints and

body exposure of White women rose significantly (Plous & Nepture, 1997). Even if women in general are sexualized, it appears that ethnoracial minority women are particularly sexualized in the media, often wearing clothing that accentuate their sexuality. hooks (1992) has argued that since the days of slavery, Whites have projected a repressed sexuality into Black bodies, but the Black female body in particular has granted (White) audiences access to forbidden or taboo forms of sexual expression. Common media stereotypes of ethnoracial minority women further attest the imbalance in portrayals among women. Compared to virginal White women, ethnoracial minority women are presented as sexual objects not as romantic partners. That is to say, Latinas are seen in the media as harlots, spicy, and hot sexpots (Molina-Guzmán, 2010; Ramirez-Berg, 2002; Valdivia, 2010). Black women are alluring and seductive jezebels or asexual mammies (Allison, 2016; Boogle, 2002). East Asian women are subservient and exotic geishas or sexually active China dolls (Ong & Pham, 2009; Parreñas Schimizu, 2007). Conclusively, in the content analysis literature, popular culture commodifies the bodies of ethnoracial minority women and presents them as over-sexed objects available for consumption (Brooks & Hébert, 2006; Molina-Guzmán, 2010).

Narratives need characters and conflict to more effectively execute meaning. Narrative theory (see Bal, 2009) identifies the hero as the chief character in a story – the agent who sets all actions in motion. As a protagonist, the hero has endowed qualities or a set of extraordinary characteristics that assist in overcoming adversity and tribulations usually inflicted by the antagonist. Media utilizes this narrative structure, but it does through gendered, racialized, and classed ways. Unquestionably, media representations of

social groups at this time are skewed in favor of White, educated, heterosexual, middle/upper class, Protestant, abled-bodied, and/or men (Brooks & Hébert, 2006; GLAAD, 2015; Santhanam & Crigger, 2015).

This majoritarian presence establishes who the heroes can be in mainstream media. Minority social groups–as counterparts to the majority–occupy a minor, decorative, and supporting role to the White hero. Such has been the case with ethnoracial minority groups—chiefly Blacks and Latin@s—who are often seen as lawbreakers, blue-collar workers, and buffoons when included in mainstream media, either as protagonists or secondary characters (Negrón-Muntaner *et al*., 2014; Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005; Tukachinsky et al., 2015). It could be argued that Asians' media typicality is more favorable for characterizing model minorities, but they suffer from a considerable underrepresentation in the media when compared to other ethnoracial groups – in 2014, about 6.6% of main cast actors on network TV shows (Fitzpatrick, 2015) and about 5.3% of film actors were of Asian descent (Santhanam & Crigger, 2015).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter builds on the previous one but focuses in the literature above. It continues the conversation about the worth given to color when society encourages its insignificance yet remains a contributing factor in marginalizing ethnic and racial groups on television. The current study therefore explores how seeing color as a source of difference—that is, being color-conscious—may encourage audiences not to dismiss the

negative televisibility of ethnoracial groups, and in so doing, a colored televisuality gets formed or maintained.

In matters regarding media, seeing and talking about color may very be the product of one's ethnoracial membership, particularly if one belongs to a stigmatized, marginalized, or oppressed group (Bobo, 1995; Mok, 1998; Rockler, 2002). While it is common for audiences to talk about ethnicity and race in their discussions of media, these conversations are intensified if media portrayals directly implicate the ingroup (Cooper, 1998; Moody, 2014; Rojas & Piñon, 2016). Before addressing the role of ethnoracial attitudes, we must first ask the question:

RQ1: Is the onscreen marginality of (a) Whites, (b) Blacks, (c) Latin@s, and (d) Asians the product of ethnoracial membership?

Color-consciousness has two dimensions: color-awareness, which is based on multiculturalism (Neville *et al*., 2013); and (2) power-awareness, which is the reflection, motivation, and action to act upon racial inequalities (Diemer *et al*., 2015). It can be expected that ethnoracial minorities are more likely than the majority in expressing these ethnic/racial attitudes, but are these good predictors for observing ethnoracial marginality on television? If so, whose and what type? It is typical for media studies about audiences to focus how an ethnoracial group reacts to the images of their ingroup (for instance, Latin@s on Latin@s) or one outgroup (for instance, Whites on Blacks). It is less common for research to include several ethnic groups in their analysis, thus it would difficult to hypothesize patterns. For this reason, another research question is asked:

RQ2: How does color-consciousness—specifically, (a) color-awareness and (b) power-awareness—relate to the onscreen/television marginality of (1) whites, (2) blacks, (3) Latin@s, and (4) Asians?

METHODS

The same data set was used as in Study 1 (see Methods section). Table 1 has pertinent demographic information of the current sample of Millennials, but to re-cap, most were women, born in Texas, some variation of a Democrat, middle-class, and were almost equally distributed into a White or non-White ethnoracial minority.

MEASURES

Unless otherwise stated, all items were randomized and used 7-point Likert-scales of agreement (1 = *Strongly Agree*, 7 = *Strongly Disagree*) or frequency (1 = *Never*, 7 = *Always*). Measures were meant to capture respondents' perception on various forms of ethnoracial prototypicality on television, why they watch television, and their attitudes about recognizing color. Complete measures can be found in the Appendix.

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Here, onscreen marginality is believed to be the product of three typical characterizations enveloping ethnoracial minorities in the media: criminality, decorative roles, or sexuality (Gray, 2004; Larson, 2006; Ono & Pham, 2009; Valdivia, 2010).

Participants were instructed to consider both women/men in their assessment of how certain adjectives that typify four ethnoracial groups in entertainment television: (1) Whites, (2) Latin@s, (3) Blacks, and (4) East/South Asians. Before given a list of adjectives, respondents were asked "Think of the 'typical' depiction of an *ethnoracial group* on entertainment television, and then select the frequency to which they are depicted with these attributes: _____."

Criminal prototypicality. Mastro and Kopacz's (2006) Criminality Scale assesses perceptions of media criminality through four adjectives: (a) violent, (b) criminal, (c) dealing drugs, and (d) using drugs.

Decorative role prototypicality. Media has historically included ethnoracial minorities in peripheral roles (Larson, 2006; Merskin, 2011). They are non-essential characters, or at best, secondary characters in narratives or major storylines. Their narrative space is that of filler or un-realized characters according to narrative theory (Bal, 2009). With this said, these five adjectives encapsulate the perceived decorative narrative state of ethnoracial groups on television: (a) occasional character, (b) one-dimensional, (c) supporting character, (d) background character, and (e) stock character.

Sexuality prototypicality. Content analytic work has found that sexy attire (e.g., skin-tight or revealing clothing), nudity (either partial or complete), and physicality contribute to the sexualization of (wo)men in the media, with women more likely sexualized than men on television and film (Smith, Choueiti, & Pieper, 2014, 2016). Moreover, scholars have argued that the masculinities and femininities of ethnoracial minority (wo)men are particularly racialized, accentuating their bodies as lustful,

desirable, and seductive (Bounds Littlefield, 2008; hooks, 1992; Ramirez-Berg, 2002). Borrowing from this literature on the media images of (wo)men and ethnorace, four gender-neutral traits attempted to encapsulate the perceived sexuality prototypicality of ethnoracial groups: (a) sexy body (desirable physique), (b) sexual, (c) seductive, and (d) skin-tight clothing.

Four separate principal component analyses (with a Varimax rotation) were conducted to ensure the selected adjectives encompassed three separate types of onscreen marginality for each ethnoracial group. The individual statistical tests all yielded a three-factor solution, hence validating three distinct forms of onscreen marginality. This meant that all items loaded into their expected category and were coherent across ethnoracial groups, including the ones designed for this study. Sexuality or decorative role prototypicality demonstrated high levels of internal reliability too. The Cronbach's alpha for sexuality prototypicality across ethnoracial groups ranged from 0.93 to 0.95, while those for decorative role prototypicality were between 0.82 and 0.89. Tables 8 through 11 contain these statistical results as well as any pertinent information: means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha.

The onscreen marginality of each ethnoracial group varied in what explained the most/least factor variability. While criminal prototypicality explained the most variance for Blacks on television, it was the least for Whites and Asians. Sexuality prototypicality was the top factor solution for all ethnoracial groups except for Blacks. Decorative role prototypicality explained the least variance for Latin@s and Blacks.

Table 8. Principal Component Analysis of Onscreen Marginality for Whites					
	Sexuality	Decorative	Criminality	*M*	*SD*
Sexual	.93			4.44	1.13
Seductive	.93			4.38	1.12
Sexy body	.86			4.64	1.16
Skin-tight clothing	.84			4.37	1.12
Occasional character		.82		3.92	1.39
Background character		.79		3.83	1.35
Supporting character		.75		4.28	1.25
Stock character		.72		4.04	1.41
One-dimensional		.70		3.71	1.28
Criminal			.86	3.40	0.98
Dealing drugs			.84	3.13	0.99
Using drugs			.78	3.53	1.04
Violent			.74	3.57	1.01
Eigen value	4.95	2.35	1.79		
Variance explained	38.09%	18.09%	13.80%		
Cronbach's alpha (α)	0.93	0.83	0.85		
M	4.46	3.95	3.41		
SD	1.03	1.03	0.83		

Table 9. Principal Component Analysis of Onscreen Marginality for Latin@s					
	Sexuality	Criminality	Decorative	*M*	*SD*
Seductive	.90			4.62	1.23
Sexual	.90			4.68	1.23
Sexy body	.90			4.69	1.24
Skin-tight clothing	.83			4.51	1.23
Dealing drugs		.90		4.79	1.13
Criminal		.87		4.74	1.08
Using drugs		.85		4.65	1.15
Violent		.83		4.61	1.10
Background character			.78	4.42	1.15
Occasional character			.76	4.25	1.14
Supporting character			.71	4.14	1.12
Stock character			.70	4.11	1.19
One-dimensional			.65	4.34	1.19
Eigen value	6.56	1.73	1.55		
Variance explained	50.48%	13.33%	11.88%		
Cronbach's alpha (α)	0.95	0.94	0.82		
M	4.63	4.70	4.25		
SD	1.15	1.02	0.88		

Table 10. Principal Component Analysis of Onscreen Marginality for Blacks					
	Criminality	Sexuality	Decorative	*M*	*SD*
Dealing drugs	.91			4.83	1.14
Criminal	.91			4.95	1.11
Using drugs	.90			4.80	1.17
Violent	.86			4.95	1.08
Seductive		.93		3.90	1.14
Sexual		.91		3.96	1.13
Sexy body		.89		4.00	1.15
Skin-tight clothing		.83		3.84	1.18
Background character			.83	4.43	1.15
Stock character			.79	4.10	1.15
Occasional character			.77	4.25	1.06
Supporting character			.76	4.35	1.16
One-dimensional			.66	4.22	1.16
Eigen value	5.91	2.33	1.75		
Variance explained	45.48%	17.92%	13.43%		
Cronbach's alpha (α)	0.95	0.93	0.85		
M	4.88	3.92	4.28		
SD	1.05	1.05	0.90		

Table 11. Principal Component Analysis of Onscreen Marginality for Asians					
	Sexuality	Decorative	Criminality	*M*	*SD*
Seductive	.94			2.98	1.19
Sexual	.92			2.99	1.21
Sexy body	.91			3.01	1.25
Skin-tight clothing	.85			3.02	1.20
Background character		.88		4.10	1.33
Occasional character		.85		3.97	1.29
Supporting character		.85		3.94	1.31
Stock character		.80		3.87	1.32
One-dimensional		.77		4.09	1.37
Criminal			.89	2.88	1.19
Dealing drugs			.88	2.64	1.16
Using drugs			.84	2.59	1.14
Violent			.81	2.88	1.20
Eigen value	5.27	3.24	1.68		
Variance explained	40.50%	24.95%	12.91%		
Cronbach's alpha (α)	0.95	0.89	0.91		
M	3.74	4.00	2.75		
SD	1.42	1.10	1.04		

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Ethnoracial group membership. Not enough ethnoracial minorities participated in the study for proper intergroup comparisons. To ensure that ethnorace had enough statistical power, ethnoracial groups were dichotomized and dummy coded into members of the White majority (1) or the non- minority White (0). See Table 1 for ethnoracial group composition.

Color-consciousness. Color-consciousness stands in direct contrast to color blindness and is speculated to possess two opposite dimensions (see Figure 1): color awareness and power-awareness. Operating at the interpersonal level, color awareness recognizes color as an important means of intergroup distinction and recognizes that one's ethnic/racial group exists and has its own entity (see Chapter 1). For this reason, multiculturalism best captures this notion and stands as alternative perspective to color-evasion colorblindness (Nevielle *et al*., 2013). Rosenthal and Levy's (2012) 5-item measure of multiculturalism was used in this study to stand in for color awareness racial consciousness. Sample items include: "All cultures have their own distinct traditions and perspectives," and "Each racial and ethnic group has important distinguishing features." The measure was highly reliable ($\alpha = 0.90$; $M = 2.56$, $SD = 1.07$). Appendix D has the five items.

Power-awareness racial-consciousness could be treated as a critical cognizance about how race and ethnicity inform social status and opportunity, biasing socio-cultural attitudes and benefits to certain ethnoracial groups (Bell, 2016; Jones, 2016; Neville *et al.*, 2013; Squires, 2014; Suzette *et al*., 2016). Diemer *et al*. (2015) find that critical

consciousness has three interrelated domains: critical reflection, critical motivation, and critical action or activism – all which are concerned with marginality and oppression. This dissertation adapted the Critical Consciousness Scale (Diemer *et al*., 2015) and specified it to race and ethnicity so a measure of color consciousness could be established. The critical reflection subscale (8 items) establishes how people read and see their experienced in an ethnoracially stratified social world. The critical motivation (7 items) assesses the agency one feels possess in changing injustices and inequalities due to race and ethnicity. Lastly, critical action (9 items) is a behavioral measure that considers the commitment that people have in changing ethnoracial inequalities and injustices. Sample items include: "Certain racial or ethnic groups have fewer chances to get good jobs" (Critical Ethnoracial Reflection Subscale) ($\alpha = 0.79$); "I am motivated to try to end racism and discrimination" (Critical Ethnoracial Motivation Subscale) ($\alpha = 0.93$); "I contacted a public official by phone, mail, or email to tell him or her how you felt about a ethnic or racial issue" (Critical Ethnoracial Action Subscale) ($\alpha = 0.85$). The 24 items worked as one-single measure of power awareness racial consciousness ($\alpha = 0.87$; $M = 5.18$, $SD = 0.67$). Appendix E has all items

CONTROL VARIABLES

Demographics. The television/media depictions of ethnoracial groups are also gendered (Molina-Guzmán, 2010), and as such, gender is a factor in how these portrayals are interpreted (Bobo, 1995; Rojas, 2004; Press, 1991). Social position can capture marginality, particularly if people feel outside the mainstream for not possessing the

resources needed to be part of it. Millennials who see themselves in the fringes of society—whether it is at the expense of gender, social class, and/or ethnicity/race—may be more cognizant about negative ethnoracial portrayals on television (Rockler, 2002; hooks, 1992; Press, 1991).

Television experience. The television experience of Millennials was evaluated in three ways: (1) television consumption; (2) ethnoracial-oriented gratifications satisfied through television; and (3) knowledge of television practices and media in general.

Television viewership. Watching more television may increase audiences' opportunities of noticing the manners in which social groups are portrayed (Rivadeneyra, 2006), and as such, television consumption should be added as a control variable.

Ethnoracial television gratifications. Scholars (hooks, 1992; Valdivia, 1998) have theorized about what pleasure is derived from media texts through an audience positionality of gender and/or ethnic/racial; the assumption is that marginalized people strategize, negotiate, or reimage those images that are psychologically and ideologically destructive to their sense of self. Some audience studies have examined how ethnoracial minority group skip/select television content based on its satisfaction of ethnic/racial identity needs and/or cultural maintenance (Abrams Giles, 2007, 2009; Rios & Gaines, 1998). If television satisfies social identity gratifications based on ethnorace, then it is likely that Millennials feel comfortable with what television offers them and perhaps ignore those negative portrayals that exist of ethnoracial groups. To test this assumption, participants completed an amended 8-item Social Identity Gratifications Scale (Harwood, 1999) that centered ethnic and racial gratifications. Specifically, they were asked whether

they liked to watch television "to see people of my own ethnic and racial background with whom I can identify" or "to learn more about people from my own ethnic and racial background." The composite measure was reliable here (α = 0.95; *M* = 4.51, *SD* = 1.47). Appendix F has all eight items

Media/television literacy. Knowing how media operates could foster a consciousness about what narratives, images, or myths sustain it and the social hierarchies the medium supports (Scharrer & Ramasubramanian, 2015; Vargas, 2009). Media literacy is therefore an important component in seeing the onscreen marginality of certain or most ethnoracial groups. Besides, since data was collected from media-oriented courses, taking television/media literacy into account controls for the potential knowledge participants gained from discussing media critically, including media images of ethnoracial groups. Participants completed the 13-item, Media and Television Literacy Levels Scale (Korkmaz & Yesil, 2011). Sample items include: (1) "I think media works for the benefit of some people and excludes some others;" (2) "I know the characteristics of TV channels in our country and the factors determining their broadcasting policies;" and (3) "I question who benefits from the media and who is excluded and why." Scores were averaged together and were found to be a reliable measure of media/television literacy (α = 0.91; *M* = 5.00, *SD* = 0.85). Appendix G has all 13 items

RESULTS

Prior to any former analyses, the general associations among main variables were examined through Pearson correlations. Table 12 has the correlations. It is important to

first discuss the associations that onscreen marginality had across its forms. The positive correlations between forms and within ethnoracial groups suggests that onscreen marginality is deeply inter-connected, and noticing one type leads to perceiving the rest regardless of who these portrayals belongs to.

Because the first research question of this study is interested in the ethnoracial group membership of Millennials and the perceived onscreen marginality of ethnoracial groups, most of the group differences were observed with perceived criminality. Specifically, White Millennials are associated with high scores of perceived White (r = .09, p < .05) or Asian criminality (r = .09, p < .05), while non-White Millennials are more likely to observe that of Latin@s (r = -.16, p < .001) or Blacks (r = -.16, p < .001). One other group difference among surveyed Millennials was observed, which was with sexuality of Whites on television where non-Whites had higher perceptions of it (r = -.09, p < .05). Other than this Millennials had a homogenous perception regarding perceived onscreen marginality regardless of ethnoracial group.

The second research question was interested in color-consciousness and its relationship to perceived onscreen marginality. What can be observed from the correlation analysis is that these relationships tend to be negative between color-awareness and onscreen marginality and negative for power-awareness and onscreen marginality. These relationships are mostly weak though. Furthermore, no demographic differences were observed, which only tells us that the sample of Millennials was homogenous in their color-conscious orientations regardless of their ethnoracial membership, gender, or social standing.

Table 12. Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations between Study 2 Main Variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
(1) Ethnorace $_{(1 = White)}$	—									
(2) Gender $_{(1 = Woman)}$	.04	—								
(3) Subjective social status	.34***	-.02	—							
(4) TV viewership	.01	.13**	-.03	—						
(5) Ethnoracial identity gratification	-.32***	.16**	-.12**	-.18***	—					
(6) Media/TV literacy	.01	-.07	-.05	.10*	-.09*	—				
(7) W criminality	.09*	-.08b	-.09*	.02	-.15**	.07	—			
(8) L criminality	-.16***	.10*	-.06	.00	.09*	.28 ***	.20***	—		
(9) B criminality	-.16***	.09*	-.08a	.03	.08a	.33***	.09*	.68***	—	
(10) A criminality	.09*	-.06	-.07	.07	-.02	-.06	.35***	.04	-.08a	—
(11) W sexuality	-.09*	.04	-.03	.02	-.00	.22***	.31***	.44***	.41***	.09*
(12) L sexuality	-.03	.12**	-.01	.02	-.04	.33***	.12**	.49***	.47***	.03
(13) B sexuality	-.08b	.14**	-.11*	.06	.01	.23***	.19***	.34***	.36***	.17***
(14) A sexuality	.06	-.10*	-.15***	-.02	-.03	.07b	.30***	.07	-.03	.49***
(15) W decorative role	.05	-.08b	.04	.00	-.12*	.11*	.37***	.17***	.07b	.15***
(16) L decorative role	-.01	.10*	-.03	.08b	.00	.29***	.12**	.50***	.49***	.07
(17) B decorative role	-.03	.08b	-.09*	.07	.01	.31***	.09*	.36***	.47***	.07
(18) A decorative role	.05	.05	-.03	.11**	.00	.27***	.05	.26***	.28***	.17***
(19) Color awareness	.07b	-.07b	-.04	-.04	-.09*	-.22***	.13**	-.16***	-.18***	.18***
(20) Power awareness	-.03	.02	.07	.12**	-.04	.41***	-.10*	.25***	.27***	-.16***

Note: W = White Prototypicality, L = Latin@ Prototypicality, B = Black Prototypicality, A = Asian Prototypicality
***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$, $^{a}p \leq .06$, $^{b}p \leq .10$

Table 12. Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations between Study 2 Main Variables (Cont'd)

	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)
(1) Ethnorace (1 = White)										
(2) Gender (1 = Woman)										
(3) Subjective social status										
(4) TV viewership										
(5) Ethnoracial identity gratification										
(6) Media/TV literacy										
(7) W criminality										
(8) L criminality										
(9) B criminality										
(10) A criminality										
(11) W sexuality	—									
(12) L sexuality	.35***	—								
(13) B sexuality	.30***	.43***	—							
(14) A sexuality	.18***	.15***	.28***	—						
(15) W decorative role	.27***	.14**	.14**	.17***	—					
(16) L decorative role	.29***	.49***	.30***	.05	.03	—				
(17) B decorative role	.28***	.37***	.31***	.02	.13**	.64***	—			
(18) A decorative role	.19***	.34***	.24***	.12***	.02	.58***	.63***	—		
(19) Color awareness	-.16***	-.15**	-.00	.10*	-.04	-.09*	-.13**	-.05	—	
(20) Power awareness	.17***	.23***	.17***	-.04	.10*	.18***	.27***	.21***	-.31***	—

Note: W = White Prototypicality, L = Latin@ Prototypicality, B = Black Prototypicality, A = Asian Prototypicality
***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$, [a]$p \leq .06$, [b]$p \leq .10$

The statistical relevance of each predictor on onscreen marginality was examined through individual hierarchical linear regressions. Demographic information was entered in block 1 (step 1), followed by media experience (step 2), and lastly by color-consciousness (step 3). Table 13 summarizes the four separate regression models for criminality televisual prototypicality; one for each ethnoracial group. Table 14 and Table 15 also summarize the regression results for sexuality and decorative prototypicality respectively.

Table 13. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Predictor Variables of Criminal Prototypicality ($N = 495$)

	Criminality Prototypicality			
	White	Latin@	Black	Asian
	β	*β*	*B*	*β*
Block 1: Demographics				
Ethnorace	.09[b]	-.14**	-.12*	.11*
Gender	-.04	.13**	.12**	-.05
Subjective Social Position	-.13**	-.00	-.04	-.08[b]
ΔR^2	3.5%***	3.5%**	3.1%**	2.2%*
Block 2: Media Experience				
Television Viewership	-.01	-.06	-.02	-.03
Ethnoracial Identity Gratification	-.14**	.03	.03	-.01
Media Literacy	.11*	.23***	.27***	-.01
ΔR^2	2.1%*	8.7%***	11.3%***	0.8%
Block 3: Color Consciousness				
Color Awareness	.10*	-.04	-.05	.15**
Power Awareness	-.10*	.14**	.13**	-.10*
ΔR^2	2.1%**	2.0%**	2.1%**	3.3%***
R^2	7.7%	14.2%	15.0%	6.3%
df	(8, 487)	(8, 486)	(8, 487)	(8, 491)
Final *F*	5.07***	10.02***	11.92***	4.15***

Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p \leq .05$

Table 14. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Predictor Variables of Sexuality Prototypicality ($N = 497$)

	Sexuality Prototypicality			
	White	Latin@	Black	Asian
	β	*β*	*β*	*β*
Block 1: Demographics				
Ethnorace (1 = White)	-.09[a]	-.06	-.04	.13**
Gender (1 = women)	.08[a]	.15**	.17***	-.10**
Subjective Social Position	-.02	.00	-.11*	.17***
ΔR^2	1.1%	1.5%a	3.7%***	4.4%***
Block 2: Media Experience				
Television Viewership	-.01	-.05	-.00	.00
Ethnoracial Identity Gratification	-.07	-.06	-.01	.01
Media Literacy	.17**	.30***	.21***	.06
ΔR^2	1.5%*	1.2%*	1.2%*	0.7%
Block 3: Color Consciousness				
Color Awareness	-.09*	-.05	.08[b]	.08
Power Awareness	.08	.10*	.11*	-.02
ΔR^2	5.2%***	12.5%***	5.6%***	0.1%
R^2	7.8%	15.2%	10.5%	5.2%
df	(8, 489)	(8, 488)	(8, 489)	(8, 488)
Final *F*	5.16***	10.91***	7.18***	3.36**

Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p \leq .05$

Table 15. Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Predictor Variables of Decorative Role Prototypicality ($N = 491$)

	Decorative Prototypicality			
	White	Latin@	Black	Asian
	β	*B*	*β*	*β*
Block 1: Demographics				
Ethnorace	.04	-.04	-.01	.05
Gender	-.08[b]	.10*	-08[b]	.02
Subjective Social Position	-.01	.02	-.09*	-.01
ΔR^2	1.3%b	0.9%	1.5%b	0.2%
Block 2: Media Experience				
Television Viewership	-.04	.04	.02	.09*
Ethnoracial Identity Gratification	-.09[b]	.01	.03	.07
Media Literacy	.10*	.26***	.24***	.21***
ΔR^2	2.2%*	8.9%***	9.9%***	8.0%***
Block 3: Color Consciousness				
Color Awareness	-.02	-.01	-.03	.03
Power Awareness	.06	.08[b]	.17**	.14**
ΔR^2	0.4%	0.6%	2.5%***	1.6%*
R^2	3.9%	10.3%	13.8%	9.8%
df	(8, 483)	(8, 482)	(8, 479)	(8, 479)
Final *F*	2.42*	6.93***	9.62***	6.48***

Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p \leq .05$

RQ1: ETHNORACIAL MEMBERSHIP AND ONSCREEN MARGINALITY

The first research question asked if ethnoracial groups would differ in noticing onscreen marginality. Ethnorace was still a significant predictor of criminality and sexuality prototypicality but not of decorative role prototypicality, and these relationships existed after entering other relevant predictors into the regression models. The White ethnoracial majority was more likely to notice the perceived criminal ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$) or sexuality prototypicality of Asians ($\beta = .13$, $p < .01$) than were Millennials who self-identified as ethnoracial minorities. Post-hoc independent sample t-tests only support the latter observation, with White Millennials ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.99$) scoring higher than non-Whites ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 1.08$) in their observations of Asian criminality, $t(530) = 2.16$, $p = .03$. Conversely, ethnoracial minority Millennials were more likely to notice the perceived criminal prototypicality of Blacks ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .05$) or Latin@s ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .01$) than were members of the White ethnoracial majority. Post-hoc independent t-tests provide further support this assumption. One t-test revealed that White Millennials ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.95$) scored lower in perceiving criminal portrayals of Latin@s than non-White Millennials ($M = 4.86$, $SD = 1.06$), $t(524) = -3.72$ $p < .001$. Similar patters were observed with the perceived criminal portrayals of Blacks, $t(516.87) = -3.64$ $p < .001$, with White Millennials ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 0.90$) scoring lower than non-Whites ($M = 5.03$, $SD = 1.14$).

RQ2: COLOR-CONSCIOUSNESS ON ONSCREEN MARGINALITY

The second research question was interested in understanding the statistical associations between color-consciousness and onscreen marginality. Across the regression models, either color-awareness or power-awareness tended to exclusively predict a given type of onscreen marginality for a particular ethnoracial group. There were two occasions in which both dimensions of color-consciousness predicted the same television prototypicality but in opposite directions. This was the case with the criminal prototypicality of Asians and Whites, where the association was positive for color-awareness but negative for power-awareness. So, Millennials who tended to emphasize ethnoracial group differences—in the spirit of multiculturalism—are more likely to observe Whites ($\beta = .10$, $p < .05$) or Asians being criminal-like on television ($\beta = .15$, $p < .01$). In contrast, Millennials who are analytical about ethnic/race in society are least likely to notice these same portrayals. No other double predictions of onscreen marginality were observed. The next two paragraphs will center on results of each dimension of color-consciousness on screen marginality, starting with power-aware racial-consciousness as it had the most predictions.

Ethnoracial attitudes relating to power-awareness predicted onscreen marginality in more occasions than did color-awareness. Power-aware racial-consciousness is about being reflective, critical, and action-oriented on matters of structures and institutional ethnic/racial inequalities, and the more Millennials here adopted this orientation, the more likely they were to notice onscreen marginality. This was the case for perceiving criminality of Latin@s ($\beta = .14$, $p < .01$) or Blacks ($\beta = .13$, $p < .01$), or the perceiving

Asians ($\beta = .14$, $p < .01$) or Blacks ($\beta = .17$, $p < .01$) in decorative roles, and even the perceived sexuality of Latin@s ($\beta = .10$, $p < .05$) or Blacks ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$). Based on these patterns, it was observed that power-aware color-consciousness consistently predicted the onscreen marginality of Blacks across its three *negative* portrayals and was the least likely to predict that of Asians.

Color awareness was just significantly associated with one sexuality prototypicality, that of Whites. Millennials who tended to stress ethnoracial distinctions were least likely to notice sultry White characters on television ($\beta = -.09$, $p \leq .05$). This relationship is important in at least two ways. First, it was the only negative association that existed through color awareness with onscreen marginality, and secondly, its association to Whiteness also merits attention. Their implications on color onscreen will be elaborated in the upcoming discussion section.

PREDICTIVE POWER OF COLOR-CONSCIOUSNESS ON ONSCREEN MARGINALITY

The statistical correlations between color-consciousness and onscreen marginality suggest a shared connection. However, we should be careful from exaggerating their relationship. Even if the reviewed literature and data here suggest a casual link, we cannot establish any causal link given the cross-sectional nature of the data. In addition, upon closer examination of the 12 hierarchical regression models, the total variance of all predictors ranged from 3.9% to 15.2%. The individual contribution of color-consciousness was as low as 0.1% to as high as 12.5%. These results restrict the

inferences and generalizations that can be made about the significance of color-consciousness in seeing color on television.

TELEVISION EXPERIENCE ON ONSCREEN MARGINALITY

Out of the television experience variables controlled in this study, media/television literacy was the most successful, significant predictor of onscreen marginality. It positively predicted all forms of onscreen marginality for Whites, Latin@s, and Blacks, but was only statistically significant for perceptions of Asians in decorative roles ($\beta = .21$, $p < .001$). Such patterns suggest that participants' knowledge about how media/television works (e.g., framings of issues, biased medium, rating systems) enables them to notice when ethnoracial groups embody qualities that are arguably detrimental to their social image. The fact that media/television literacy was less consistent in predicting the perceived onscreen marginality of Asians than its fellow ethnoracial groups invites further question that can only be speculated here: Is it because their symbolic marginality is often not included in media discussions? Does their onscreen marginality not measure up to that of other ethnoracial minorities?

The other two television-oriented control variables had one statistically significant prediction each. Watching less television (across several genres) lead to perceiving Asians in more decorative roles ($\beta = .09$, $p < .05$). Those watched television to gratify identity needs relating to one's ethnorace (for instance, seeing people similar to them ethnically/racially) tended to perceiving Whites being criminal-like the least ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .01$). No other statistically significant associations were observed for television

consumption and ethnoracial gratifications on onscreen marginality across the regression models, which seems to suggest that other predictors drove the statistical relationships.

DEMOGRAPHICS ON ONSCREEN MARGINALITY

Participants' gender and subjective social position were also statistically significant in seeing onscreen marginality. It appears that women pay attention to (or seem to remember) the marginal televisual characterizations of ethnoracial minorities, since they were more likely to notice Latin@ (β = .15, p < .01) or Black sexuality (β = .17, p < .001), as well as the criminal prototypicality of Latin@s (β = .13, p < .01) or Blacks (β = .12, p < .01), and the decorative roles of Asians (β = .10, p < .05) than men. Men, nevertheless, were more likely than women to notice Asian sexuality on television (β = -.10, p < .01). Those who tended to see themselves as better off in society were least likely to notice Black sexuality (β = -.11, p < .05) or their decorative roles (β = -.09, p < .05), or even White criminality (β = -.13, p < .01) yet were the most likely to see Asian sexuality (β = .10, p < .05) compared to other Millennials who ranked themselves lower or less well off in society.

DISCUSSION

This study explored the possibility of young Millennials being an active audience of color by examining how their color-conscious attitudes (statistically) related to common *negative* portrayals of ethnoracial groups on television. The argument was that the symbolic and marginal treatment of ethnoracial minorities in the media is difficult to

forget and evade. So, the recognition that ethnicity/race mattered in society and inter-personal relationship (that is, being color-conscious) would help television audiences notice the onscreen marginality of ethnoracial groups. The statistical results and findings from the current study offer support for this argument. Generally, the more young (educated) Millennials tended to perceive the onscreen marginality of ethnoracial groups (mostly that of minorities), the more they endorsed a power-awareness orientation to color. That is to say, the more participants were critical, motivated, or acted upon structural and social inequalities at the expense of ethnorace, they were also likely to notice how ethnoracial groups are marginalized in symbolic contexts like television. An awareness of onscreen marginality was not only dependent on color attitudes but also on demographic factors like participants' gender or ethnoracial membership. What was found in this study thus contradicts post-raciality, or at least tells us to reconsider what the "post-" means. The following section will discuss these points.

COLOR-CONSCIOUSNESS AND ONSCREEN MARGINALITY

Seeing color (or being ethnoracially conscious) may encourage audiences to notice the marginal representations that envelop ethnoracial groups on television but not in similar ways. Perceived White marginality tended to correlate negatively with color-consciousness, when this relationship was mostly positive for the prototypicality of ethnoracial minorities. Such opposite patterns suggest that *negative* mediated Whiteness (or its televisuality) is ambivalent for Millennials, while those of ethnoracial minorities tends to be strictly marginal. Specifically, color awareness and power predicted perceived

White criminality in opposite directions. This disagreement is perhaps due to audiences not knowing how to interpret the criminality of Whites. With White anti-hero programming entering popular and mainstream culture, the narratives humanize and individualize the criminality of Whites (Wayne, 2014a, 2014b), whereas that of ethnoracial minorities is cultural and harder to conceive as self-less.

It was also found the perceived sexuality of Whites was negatively related with color awareness. This observation could be due to the asexuality of Whites, whose bodies are not possessors of carnal desires unlike non-White (typically dark) bodies (Bounds Littlefield, 2008; hooks, 1992; Parreñas Schimizu, 2007). Therefore, those who tended to endorse multiculturalism were less likely to perceive the sexuality of White television characters, because it goes unnoticed with the recognition of more bodies.

Millennials potentially hold negative mediated Blackness as the epitome of onscreen marginality. Power awareness was consistently and positively related to perceptions of Black sexuality, criminality, and role/decorative prototypicality, while such relationships were non- or only sporadically significant for White representations and other ethnoracial minorities. We must keep in mind that on television, Blacks are the only ethnoracial minority group that is arguably represented on television according to their US Census numbers (Hunt *et al*., 2015, 2016; Negrón-Muntaner *et al*., 2014; Signorielli, 2009; Tukachinsky *et al*., 2015). This televisibility, whether positive or negative, increases their probability of being present in viewers' minds and media experience. Does this mean that the marginal representations of other ethnoracial groups do not measure up against those of Blacks? Such questions cannot be answered here. It

does, however, call attention to the cultural production (and media construction) of marginality, and what ethnoracial identities and experiences are marked and marketed as *authentic* embodiments of oppression (Dávila, 2012; Gray, 2004; Molina-Guzmán, 2010). The televisibility of Blacks is of concern to audiences, as evident in the findings in this chapter, but we should also pay attention to why the marginality of Latin@s and Asians did not predicted in a similar fashion across regression models.

Even if (East & South) Asians are usually considered grossly underrepresented on television (Fitzpatrick, 2015; Tukachinsky *et al*., 2015), Millennials appear to notice them. Yet, this chapter found that watching less television lead to more awareness of Asians in decorative roles. On top of this already conflicted finding, color-awareness and power-evasion orientations predicted the perceived criminality of Asians in opposite directions. Socio-demographic factors, not Millennials' color attitudes or their television experience, were most pertinent in predicting Asians' perceived sexuality. What, then, can be made of these patterns about the perceived onscreen marginality of Asians? The inconsistency in audience patterns demonstrates the symbolic ambivalence that Asian have. Should we regard them as honorary Whites given their strong possession of cultural capital and achievements of social mobility (Ono & Pham, 2009), or are they like Latin@s or Blacks who typically suffer cultural racisms like being seen as lazy and generally incompetent (Valdivia, 2010)? It appears that audiences are still sorting out their symbolic affiliation to either mainstream or marginal culture. Statistical findings from this study are still helpful in pointing us what is important to look at when we study the images of Asians on television.

The television perceptions of Latin@s (like those of Blacks) were more consistent than those Asians or Whites. This tells us that the social imagination (or televisuality) of Latin@s in regards to marginality is grounded, visible, and definable. However, even if the images/myths about Latin@s are discernable, these may not overshadow those of Blacks. The criminal or sexuality prototypicality of Latin@s and Blacks had similar statistics (including directions of predictions), but this congruence was not observed on decorative role prototypicality. Because power-awareness or subjective social status predicted the perception of Blacks as narratively peripheral but not for Latin@s, it suggests that Blacks have the upper-hand in this marginality and perhaps on others as well.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND ONSCREEN MARGINALITY

There were gender differences in perceiving the televisual sexuality of Latin@s and Blacks, with women more likely in reporting this mediated marginality than men. Dark bodies are often sexualized and fetishized given their supposedly corporal richness (e.g., well-endowed physiques, exotic features), (uncontrollable) sexual appetites, as well as its physical aggression and endurance (Allison, 2016). Dark phenotypes thus become the objects of desire and fear both onscreen and offscreen (hooks, 1992). Observing that Latin@s and Blacks had a *visible* sexuality onscreen for study participants, it amplifies the socio-cultural significance placed on the conversations about how these bodies become commodities and the labor behind this cultural production (Molina-Guzmán, 2010). Why would women notice their sexiness—one pertaining to ethnoracial

minorities—when compared to men? The answer perhaps lies in the objectification of women, and as a sexualized Other themselves, women are possibly performing *like-me* readings, thus being vigilant in issues regarding Otherized sexuality. Such an explanation still does not take into consideration the racialized readings of Latin@ and Black sexuality; in fact, it suggests that women in general set aside their ethnic and/or racial identity to identify with their sexuality. Scholars are thus encouraged to investigate this finding in an effort of clarifying the potential empathy and/or symbolic alliance.

In most cases, one demographic factor—that is, gender, ethnicity, or subjective social class—tended to statistically outweigh the others in predicting onscreen marginality. There were, however, three instances in which gender and ethnicity—although not combined[4]—predicted onscreen marginality. Non-whites tended to notice Latin@ and Black criminality onscreen more so than the White majority; women also had a similar pattern when compared to men. White Millennials, as well as men, tended to be aware of Asian sexuality on fictional television more than their counterparts.

Such aforementioned patterns in turn reveal that: (1) audiences tend to shift between social (and personal) identities when interpreting/engaging with media; (2) salient social identities tend to correspond with the type of depiction examined. These patterns strongly align with the prepositions of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Stereotype threat could too explain these findings. Ethnic or gender minorities perhaps saw Latin@ and Black criminality because they saw themselves implicated by

[4] The interaction effect of gender and ethnicity were tested by including the interaction term (gender x ethnicity) into the regression models of perceived Latin@ or Black criminal prototypicality as well as on Asian sexuality prototypicality. The three, post-hoc statistical tests observed no interaction effects between gender and ethnicity just their main effect.

these images. The same could be said about Whites and men with Asian sexuality, since Asians are the closest to White out of the ethnoracial minorities, therefore their deviance is threatening to the interests of the group. At the end of the day, whatever social image poses the most and immediate threat to media audiences, then that is the identity category that gets to be salient. Bringing forth this social identity (or identities) is done in effort of protecting or achieving a positive self-concept (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Subjective social status—where one sees oneself in a social hierarchy—had few predictions compared to ethnicity or gender. Its rather large statistical insignificance across regression models might come from the demographic composition of the sample being university students. Media audience studies have documented the manners in which education served as a method of distinction and cultural taste (Moody, 2014; Morley, 1992; Rojas, 2004; Wayne, 2016a, 2016b); yet, the current sample is in the midst of completing their post-secondary education, which is sure to boost their cultural and symbolic capital later. For those surveyed here, the modes of distinction are perhaps not in education (or cultural capital broadly), given their social status as *students* attending a top post-secondary institution in Texas. This is not to say that social class does not impact the self-perceptions of university students, as many face economic hardships, particularly ethnoracial minorities (Krogstad, 2016). Rather, the lack of statistical relationships between subjective social status and ethnoracial marginality on television may indicate a distorted perception of class among students in their immediate social world, consequently shifting their focus to other discriminatory social identities.

Self-perceptions of social status/class were still related to particular types of ethnoracial marginality on television. Millennials who tended to rate themselves as *better off* in society had lower awareness of White criminality or saw Black role prototypicality the least. Contemporary images of the White anti-hero and his/her spectacular criminality may encourage *well off* Millennials into discrediting this deviance as not a really criminality, for it is benevolent. The same Millennials also reported low decorative Blackness—a surface representation that just adds color onscreen through peripheral roles in narratives. White criminality and Black in decorate roles are racialized depictions that depict social inequalities onscreen without really challenging racial and class hierarchies. What these images provide for *well off* Millennials is a safe and consumable class-based difference that does not threaten their positionality.

The televisibility of White criminality and Whites as decorative characters may help Millennials find pleasure in their media experience, since ethnoracial television gratifications was positively related to them. Perhaps, knowing that White marginality exists onscreen provided some optimism that egalitarian representations of ethnoracial groups are coming. More support for this interpretation comes from the positive correlation between ethnoracial television gratifications and television exposure ($r = .18$, $p < .001$), which remains predominantly White (Hunt *et al*., 2015; Negrón-Muntaner *et al*., 2014; Tukachinsky *et al*., 2015). However, even if the television landscape is ethnoracially disproportionate and relies on ethnoracial stereotypes, watching television was not sufficient for Millennials to notice ethnoracial depictions. We must therefore turn to the media (dis)pleasures and frustrations (Bobo, 1995; hooks, 1992; Valdivia, 1998)

that Millennials face in this televisual milieu of post-raciality. With White marginality related to ethnoracial gratifications for Millennials, we examine what charm Whiteness has as an Othered state, especially if its presence is acknowledged.

MEDIA/TELEVISION LITERACY AND ONSCREEN MARGINALITY

Media/television literacy was related to ethnoracial marginality and inauspicious images of ethnoracial groups on fictional television. The fact that media/television literacy was not correlated to one single ethnoracial group or depiction type testifies to its potential in creating critically aware, media audiences and citizens (Lewis & Jhally, 1998; Scharrer & Ramasubramanian, 2015; Vargas, 2009). We do not know the extent, to which media literacy reduces ethnic/racial stereotyping and bias, or whether media-oriented knowledge, attitudes, or criticism are a product of long-term media education efforts or the short-term learning outcome from taking a media-specific class, or the degree to which these images are offensive to the participants. The study did not take these into consideration when creating its data collection artifact, but the correlation does document an active television audience that cautiously takes into consideration media meanings and practices that (re)produce oppression and privilege.

Having *some* understanding about how media operates could potentially help those watching television keep a vigilant eye into how media favors one ethnoracial group over another, and what cultural and social implications arise from this mediated and symbolic inequality. The positive correlation between media literacy and power awareness ($r = .41$, $p < .001$) is perhaps indicative of this active audience practice, yet

more research is needed to see if ethnoracial groups hold equal valance to media audiences.

Color-awareness and power-awareness, being modalities/shades of seeing color (Doane, 2014), could be treated as terministic screens of racial cognizance[5] (for discussion, see Rockler, 2002). The reason being that how one sees color also molds what significance is placed on color. By teasing out these shades of color, we can begin specifying what frame of ethnoracial reference are audiences using to make-sense, decode, or read the color that they are experiencing onscreen. It is thus likely that audiences developed a media-specific terministic screen o seeing color. Some support can be found with the moderate to strong correlations that exist among media/television literacy, power-awareness color-consciousness, and the various forms of onscreen marginality for ethnoracial groups (for correlations, see Table 4).

[5] Terministic screens are interpretative frames, and being perception systems, they limit and direct our attention to certain relevant matters over others. The terministic screen of racial cognizance is a system of meaning where media audiences make privilege discourses about race and marginality.

CHAPTER 4. Bringing it all together

This dissertation attempted to understand the role of television reception practices in an audience segment framed under public discourse as colorblind – young (educated) Millennials. One guiding question was therefore: What is post-racial about Millennials, and how does entertainment television fit into this contemporary ethnoracial thinking? Chapters 2 and 3 each examined one competing and opposite ideology about race and ethnicity: color-blindness and color-consciousness. Chapter 2 studied the potential effect of colorblind television content, in the form of positive ethnoracial representations and involvement with programming featuring various degrees of ethnoracial diversity, on colorblind attitudes. Chapter 3 focused on color-consciousness and its potential in helping audiences notice negative representations of ethnoracial groups. Both chapters reveal the tension that Millennials experience in confronting the conflicted ideologies about race and racism, as well as their own optimism about what the future should be: one where ethnicity/race is absent but present in issues of ethnoracial inequalities. What was found in this dissertation thus contributes to the following media studies domains: (a) active audiences and cultural readers (Ang, 2001; Bobo, 1995; Morley, 2006); (b) politics of signification (Campbell 2016; Hall, 1997, 2011); and (c) the socialization of race(ism) through media (Bounds Littlefield, 2008; Graham, 1999), especially television.

MILLENNIALS: AN ACTIVE AUDIENCE OF COLOR ON TELEVISION?

How Millennials reacted to color onscreen, either by consuming programming or noticing is perceived televisibility through representations, provides some indication about their effort in recognizing symbolic privilege and marginality. Such a statement is problematic in several ways: (1) it essentializes the viewing experiences of Millennials as "the Millennial audience" (Baker, 2006), when group differences of perception and opinion exist with certain types of representations; (2) it does not offer much specificity about what constituted a negotiated or oppositional reading, or how and why these were produced (Ang, 2001); (3) it assumes a critical interrogation of ethnicity and race, when not all active audiences are critical readers (Roscoe, Marshall, & Gleeson, 1995). If anything, the audience patterns observed in this dissertation offer an indication that Millennials are negotiating (at best) their own color meanings, as well as those provided by mainstream culture, and that these conflicted feelings and orientations trickle down to their television experiences of seeing/noticing color. Consequently, Millennials perform dominant, oppositional, and/or negotiated readings, as theorized by the encoding/decoding model (Hall, 2001b), that reflect the color orientations in hand. This is what was found in the two-individual studies carried in this dissertation.

To summarize, Chapter 2 observed that watching multicultural television programming predicted an endorsement of power-evasive colorblindness, while exceptional portrayals of Blacks did too but in the opposite direction. Millennials' arguably reinforce colorblind attitudes in their viewing television practices that reflects color neutrality and inclusion – a dominant reading with color-blindness. Yet, they also

tend to reject it (therefore, an oppositional reading), when Blacks on television are perceived to embody the values of mainstream culture (e.g., intelligent, familistic, rich). The negative association was speculated to be a product of the widely communicated violence toward Black bodies (e.g., police brutality).

Chapter 3 found that color-consciousness typically leads to noticing the perceived onscreen marginality of ethnoracial groups, but not always in the expected direction. In this case, Millennials' orientation of being aware of color as means of distinction and its presence in structural or institutional inequalities is in accordance of noticing the symbolic mistreatment of ethnoracial minorities – a dominant reading with color-consciousness. Since negative associations existed between color-consciousness and onscreen marginality, these can be generally regarded as negotiated or oppositional readings of televisual color depending on whose color (i.e., ethnoracial group) and what shade is being examined (e.g., criminality, sexuality, decorative roles).

Perhaps is best to consider the audience sample of Millennials in this dissertation as "active within structures" (Cooper & Tang, 2009, p. 415). It recognizes that media audiences are not always active and that structural and power constraints exist, which limit their interpretation of cultural texts. Other interpretive constraints are also imposed by their social identities and their intersectionality (Bobo, 1995; Morley, 2006; Press, 1991), which helps audiences determine the valence of content and what these mean to their self-concept. The primary interest of this study was to examine orientations of seeing color and how these pose as ideological constraints for Millennials in their interactions with television. Based on the combined and individual findings of Chapters

2 and 3, Millennials are indeed (mostly) bounded to the cultural terrain that tells them to see and recognize color only if its an apolitical social identity (Bobo, 2011; Hollinger, 2011; Nayak, 2006; Powell, 2008). However, they contradict it too, as it was discussed above. Discussing how the color orientations are associated with each other helps clarify the manners by which Millennials reproduce and oppose popular attitudes about ethnorace. Figure 2 summarizes the statistical correlations between color-blindness and color-consciousness and their sub-dimensions or shades.

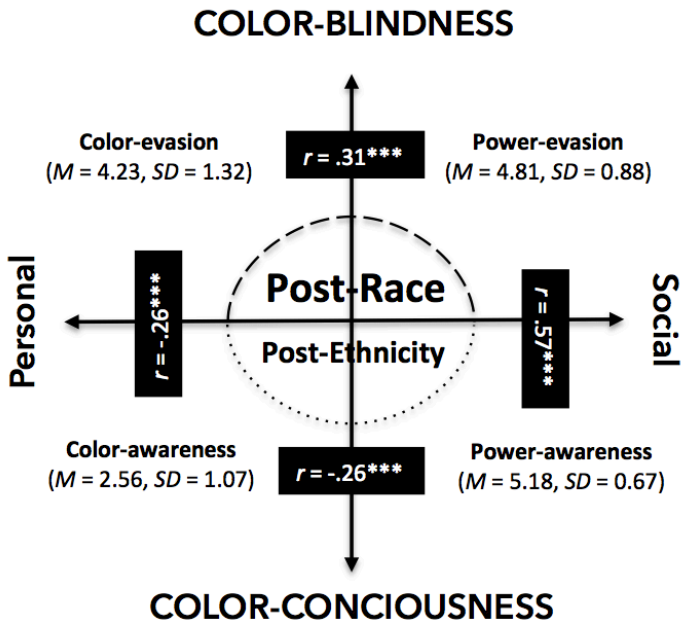

Figure 2. Correlations between color-blindness and color-consciousness and their shades; ***$p < .001$

As can be expected, color-evasion and power-evasion had a positive correlation, suggesting a uniform attitude toward dismissing color. The same positive correlation was expected from color-awareness and power-awareness in order to suggest a mutual agreement in recognizing color. These, however, had a negative association, when the

literature proposed otherwise (Bell, 2016; Neville *et al*., 2013). Moreover, color-blindness and color-consciousness (alongside their respective domains) were expected to have a negative correlation. This was evident only between color-evasion and color-awareness but not between power-evasion and power-awareness, which had a positive relationship. It is in these divergences about seeing color where the attitudes struggles of Millennials are most noticeable.

The strong and positive correlation between the power shades of colorblindness and color-consciousness is the most contradictory, since it suggest that high attitudes of dismissing how ethnorace structure social inequalities and opportunities are associated to a high orientation of reflecting, being motivated, and acting upon ethnoracial social disparities. On top of this already contradictory finding, it is ethnoracial minorities who were likely to be color-blind in its two shades (for correlations, see Table). Ethnoracial group differences in seeing color were usually statistically insignificant when other predictors were included into the regression models, thus pointing the relevance of other factors in matters of interest. The contradictions should be interpreted as an active and continuous struggle about what color means in social and cultural contexts, and television viewing practices that its meaning is highly contextual.

REVISITING POST-RACIALITY: DISCURSIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

This dissertation relied on post-raciality to examine color inclusion/diversity on television through an audience account of seeing color (that is, the attitudes that Millennials hold toward ethnorace in personal and social relationships). While post-race

is yet to be grounded as a theory, it has, however, amassed a considerable conceptual and methodological interest across educational, psychological, and media studies disciplines, which in turn has formalized post-raciality as a guiding and contemporary framework in making-sense of race and ethnicity (Nayak, 2006; Nevielle *et al*., 2001, 2013; Sanada, 2012; Squires, 2014). Post-race assumes the absence or race and racism from social and cultural realms. This is why a post-racial society is often conceived as a socio-cultural environment, mood, or condition that minimizes ethnorace from structuring inter-personal difference and institutional biases and opportunities (Gallagher, 2003; Hollinger, 2011; Pinder, 2015). Moreover, through post-raciality, scholars examine the absence-presence of ethnorace and the subtle and often implicit forms that race(ism) takes today. Since racism is not observable, or reduced to the actions of bigots instead of the cultural product of society, then race can be taken out of the inequality equation. Such thinking about post-raciality, which often materializes into colorblindness (Bobo, 2011; Cho, 2009), has been discussed as a discourse and ideology of distraction (Ono, 2010), ethnoracial amnesia (Squires, 2014), and in some instances, strategic ignorance (Sullivan & Tuana, 2007). When post-raciality shifts from theory to ideology, post-racialism is a more appropriate term (Cho, 2009), given its attention to discourses and cultural and symbolic practices that mute color perceptions. The contributions of this dissertation is first to post-raciality for it tested some of its assumptions on young (educated) Millennials. However, the colored meanings found in the televisibility of ethnoracial speaks more to post-racialism, given its emphasizes on televisuality (or how people pieced meanings) (Kaszynski, 2016).

Even in symbolic settings that endorse colorblindness, color is not without meaning, and therefore, it cannot be (or at least tends not to be) neutral in value. Chapter 2 explored the exceptional prototypicality of four ethnoracial groups on television—those representations that embody the values of mainstream culture—and how these related to colorblindness (RQ2). Chapter 3 explored how color-consciousness related to perceiving the onscreen marginality—televisual representations regarding sexuality, criminality, and supporting/background roles—of the same ethnoracial groups (RQ2). Overall study findings offer evidence to suggest that perceptions of color (here, code for ethnoracial groups) cluster in such a way that aligns with the social imaginary of ethnorace, or how ethnic/racial groups are generally defined in discourse.

The depictions of Whites and Asians tended to have similar reception patterns, and those of Blacks and Latin@s usually paralleled each other. This arguably "White" and non-White dichotomy reveals the manners how perceptions of ethnoracial groups fit and recreate familiar power tropes: oppressor/oppressed, privilege/marginality, or aggressor/victim. And seeing that racialized meanings, it is difficult to image that color has no essence (i.e., it does not define characters on television or their identity politics; Vega, 2013), or that colors have equal symbolic weights, when these are still associated with historical frameworks of color. The problem is how color divisions are being created in the subtext (that is, symbolically) and become implicit, producing new forms of racisms away from overt and physical manifestations (Bonilla-Silva, 2013). If multicultural programming is associated with power-evasion colorblindness (see Table

7), then rainbow manifestations of color on television—that is, seeing an assortment of ethnoracial groups at peace—are arguably widening color divides for not recreating the features of classical racism. With media reducing race(ism) to a matter of personal responsibility/morality and as something in the past (Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014; Shome, 2000; Squires, 2014), color hierarchies remain uncontested and subtle, plus harder to be credited as biased or structural since color does not exist in isolation or excluded from television (Griffin, 2015). Its hues, however, are symbolically charged according to their embodiment of Whiteness or Blackness, as is further discussed below.

Seeing *color* is not a uniform construct and has an assortment of modalities, or as Doane (2014) would argue, shades (see Chapter 1). This means that color orientations compliment, intertwine, and contradict each other, thus producing malleable, fluid, and inter-dependent ideologies about race and/or ethnicity (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Doane, 2014). These shades (re)articulate media viewing practices in response to political challenges and social contexts, and as such, should be regarded as shifting subjectivities in audience studies like those of gender, ethnorace, and/or class (Bobo, 1995; Morley, 1992; Press, 1991). They should be studied in relationship to the cultural texts in hand and what myths these prime. Given the panoramic and correlational nature of the two studies in this dissertation, it can only offer a broad sense about the relationship between color orientations and noticing color on television. Still, they were able to capture contradictions within and between color orientations that are worth clarifying in future research. Perhaps the most conflicting is the positive correlation between the power dimensions of color (see Figure 2), where high agreements of dismissing blatant racism,

institutional racism, and White privilege were also associated with high agreements of being reflective of, motivated to, and acting upon ethnoracial inequalities in society. The second contradiction is the negative relationship between color-awareness and power-awareness, which suggests that endorsements of multiculturalism are associated with low agreements of being critical about the role of ethnorace in society. Could these contradictions be the product of political correctness, the conception of an alternative post-racial society, or some other post-society all together? Meaning, are the conflicted attitudes the result of Millennials suppressing/masking their feelings and experiencing with racism to move forward and achieve the promises of colorblindness (e.g., meritocracy, egalitarianism)? Or, are we at the midst of what Hollinger (2012) identifies as a post-ethnic society.[6] The fact is that statistical disagreements were observed in the sample of Millennials, and to dismiss these simply as colorblind is not really taking to account the exceptions, non-static, or "loose character" of dominant ethnoracial ideologies (Bonilla-Silva, 2013).

[6] The correlational disagreement between color-awareness and power-awareness possibly captured post-ethnicity sentiments among Millennials. For Hollinger (1995, 2012), post-ethnicity describes a conceivable society where people are free to choose ethnoracial communities instead of being ascribed one. This is possible thanks to the wider celebration of multiculturalism and the advocacy of inter-ethnoracial alliances, and with no dominant ethnoracial group in cultural affairs, cultural and social institutions are discouraged from selecting or limiting their attention to a crop of ethnoracial groups. And because people are not pressured to claim an ethnoracial group, people devote as much effort as they see fit to their ethnoracial identities.

SYMBOLIC COLOR INEQUALITY: OTHERING ACROSS ETHNORACIAL GROUPS

The colorblind (TV) screen, even in its mantra of sameness Nilsen & Turner, 2014), (re)creates ethnoracial symbolic divides. Out of all ethnoracial groups, White and Black prototypicality on television, whether positive (i.e., exceptional Whiteness/Blackness) or negative (i.e., Black/White criminality, Black/White sexuality, decorative Whiteness/Blackness), had the most significant correlations to either color-blindness or color-consciousness. What is noteworthy is that mediated Whiteness and Blackness have a salient audience presence in matters concerning ethnicity and/or race, perhaps a result of the strong polarization of the social world into a Black-White domain. The perceived televisibility of Whites was, however, inconsistent, whereas that of Blacks was more stable among Millennial participants and exclusive to the power orientations of either color-blindness or color-consciousness.

These audience observations are not surprising, considering the historical and continued symbolic treatment of Whites and Blacks in the media (Dyer, 1997; Entman & Rojecki, 2001; Griffin, 2015; Ortega & Feagin, 2016). Media representations of Whites are often diverse or not confined to one profession/emotion, are universal, and often represent the virtuous hero(ine) (Dyer, 1997; Griffin, 2015; Hughey, 2014) or even benevolent anti-heroes (Wayne 2014a, 2014b). Conversely, the media images of ethnoracial minorities rely more on cultural racisms (for example, the lazy Black, the abusive welfare Queen), which in turn affect whether audiences desire to identify with their mediated representations (hooks, 1992; Mok, 1998; Rojas, 2004; Rojas & Piñon,

2016). While these images are not new (Entman & Rojecki, 2001; Iniss & Feagin, 1995; Jhally & Lewis, 1992), what is important to highlight is how these images work as a function of Othering Blackness and Whiteness in the presence of post-racialism. Put differently, what is the televisuality of post-race, or how do these images remain race-coded (or raced) and what symbolic value do these contribute to race talk in the supposed invisibility and minimization of race(ism) (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Myers, 2005)?

Arguably, post-racialism makes Whiteness visible, and marginalizes it, in order to approximate the representations of those it Others and to make it seem symbolically egalitarian. Shome (2000) argues that any challenge to Whiteness results in its strategic exposure, often that of Othering itself. This means that Whiteness vilifies itself so it can appear in order to not call too much attention to its true form and goals. In the case of colorblindness, it showcases White racists and treats racism as an interpersonal problem rather than a structural/institutional one (Griffin, 2015).

If multiculturalism legitimizes a post-racial society, then in this context, Whiteness is threatened by its *forced* decentralization of cultural and symbolic power, since it must be shared across the diversity spectrum. Colorblindness has become synonyms with a discourse of multiculturalism (Beltrán, 2005, 2013; Squires, 2014), and according to some scholars, color-blindness protects Whiteness by masking its cultural dominance under the rhetoric of meritocracy and personal responsibility (Cho, 2009; Gallagher, 2003; Pinder, 2015; Powell, 2008). Undeniably, the current sample noticed Whiteness in its mediated form. Trouble is that there was no uniformity among its predictors, which strongly suggests that for audiences, Whiteness is fluid. In other words,

it is not trapped under a set of restrictive racial meanings (Dyer, 1997; Hughey, 2014), Its fluidity facilities the inclusion of Whites into marginality, thus securing a comfortable, discernable, and dominant position within multiculturalism.

Whereas the racial meanings of mediated Whiteness are flexible, those of ethnoracial minorities are definable, contained, disciplined, and policed (Entman & Rojecki, 2001; Molina-Guzmán, 2010; Pham & Ono, 2016). The racial meanings fixed on minorities have often been established vis-à-vis a (superior) White Other (Hughey, 2014; Ramírez Berg, 2002; Ortega & Feagin, 2016); yet, we know little about how ethnoracial minorities acquire ethnoracial meaning in relationship to one another (Valdivia, 2010). Because the most correlations were observed between color orientations and the perceived prototypicality of Blacks than other ethnoracial minorities, usually in favor of calling out its marginal state, it suggests that mediated Blackness is emblematic of (symbolic) ethnoracial oppression: (1) its exceptional televisibility disagrees with colorblindness (Chapter 2), and awareness of ethnoracial inequalities predict its marginality across three dimensions onscreen: criminality, sexuality, and decorative roles (Chapter 3). This symbolic position enables mediated Blackness to become the master category of televisual marginality (Merskin, 2011), setting it as the norm from which to assess other ethnoracial minorities through intra-minority racial Othering. Even agenda setting theory seems to agree that ethnoracial groups with hyper-visibility (or those salient in people's minds) dictate how audiences think about race and/or ethnicity, depending on the frames of course (Entman & Rojecki, 2001; Ortega & Feagin, 2016).

LIMITATIONS

This dissertation is not without limitations, which must be addressed to properly contextualize its findings and any inferences from this study. The sample in hand needs to be discussed. Even if college-educated Millennials comprise about a third of its cohort (Doherty *et al*., 2015b), those surveyed were starting their post-secondary education. This has important implications to consider: (a) critical orientations are just taking shape through introductory classes; and (b) the self-concept of young adults is still in development. The university where data was collected is not just any institution of higher education; it is considered a premier public and state institution, whose admitted students were top ranking graduates from high school, usually in the top ten percent. The geographic location (Austin, Texas) also indicates that the sample is not like any other. The city and state are contradictions. The city, being the state capital, is known for its social inclusion and openness, while the state as a whole leans conservative. Lastly, the sample came from students who were taking a class about media literacy and took the survey at the end of the semester. Their responses could reflect what was learnt in class as opposed to a raw experience, or ongoing beliefs and viewing practices.

The political climate in which the data was collected could have impacted perceptions of ethnoracial groups on television. Data collection started about two weeks following the presidential election results in 2016. Millennials were one of the socio-cultural groups emotionally shaken, even devastated about Donald Trump becoming the 45th president of the United States. The dissertation findings could reflect their immediate political sentiments. Political identification was a significant predictor of power evasion

color-blindness, highlighting the importance of the political event and how it affected perceptions for this study.

Even though the demographic composition of the sample matched that of the institution, the sample was not diverse enough to conduct inter-ethnic/-racial comparisons. Specifically, there were not enough African-American students in the sample to enable a comparison of them with other minorities. So ethnoracial groups were collapsed into the traditional majority/minority binary. The dichotomy assumes a shared experience among minorities, when these are racialized with unique frames of cultural acceptance and national threats. Grouping ethnoracial groups also obscures any intra-group differences that may exist. On this note, unlike other ethnoracial groupings, that of Asians is among the most problematic, because it merges three regions with linguistic and religious variability: South, East, and South East Asia. And not all Asian students think of themselves as part of a minority in the same way that Black and Latino students might.

We should be cautious not to treat gender and ethnicity as self-evident, static, and fixed social identities. While these are self-identifications, these socio-categorical variables do not explain why how group differences take form. Similarly, ethnic identification does not capture racialized social locations (for discussion, see Lewis, 2004), and even subjective social position is only an approximation of how participants have internalized socioeconomic status in a classed society.

The televisual prototypicality of ethnoracial groups has problems with erasing difference. The measure did not ask participants to separate the representations of women

and men in their examination of ethnoracial groups, which faces problems with intersectionality. The methodological choice was primarily to reduce any survey fatigue for asking to many questions. This decision assumes that gender is not a factor in how ethnoracial groups are portrayed on television, when intra-group and intergroup racialized femininity and masculinity exists (Bounds Littlefield, 2008; Entman & Rojecki, 2001; Merskin, 2011; Parreñas Shimizu, 2007; Valdivia & Guzmán, 2004).

The next measure worth discussing is that of colorblind television programs. While many media reports and periodicals were consulted in the selection of entertainment programs, these acted more as a proxy than a true representation of the concept. The measures are still a good indication about which television programs resonate with Millennials in regards to ethnorace; however, it does not indicate how ethnorace is really implicated into the narratives and what ethnoracial ideologies really exist in them (Brooks, 2009). The findings of this dissertation, which considered entertainment television, also may not apply to other genres and narrative content such as film, Youtube, and web-series.

This dissertation talked about post-raciality in relationship to television. How much of the variance television-related or color-orientation variables explained (ΔR^2) was not radically big enough to claim these were indeed behind the observed relationships. They do, however, suggest that television has some relevance in the matter, which future studies should tease out and specify further.

Lastly, the data itself should be discussed. No casual relationships can be claimed with cross-sectional data, and even less with simple regression models. The data relies on

self-reported data, which means that survey participants could have over- or under-estimated their experiences, thoughts, values, and attitudes – perhaps to appear more politically correct. The data mostly offers a panoramic view of the relationship among post-raciality, television, color-blindness, color-consciousness, and prototypicality among Millennials. As a result, the author was cautions in not over extending the statistical inferences.

FUTURE RESEARCH

This dissertation project has unanswered questions that invite future research. One question particularly worth examining is: How does post-racial media content impact self-esteem among different ethnoracial groups? Media studies have observed and discussed the negative effects of idealized images on the self-concept of audiences. Media portrayals of ethnoracial minorities are synonymous with marginality, and ingroup audiences know it. One advantage of media content presenting a color rainbow is that its ethnoracial diversity could ideally render all characters equal and complex, therefore making it possible for marginalized ethnoracial groups feel properly represented. Exploring self-esteem and post-racial television would provide further clarity if all ethnoracial groups are given the same symbolic weight, regarding psychological media effects.

What is the place of mixed-race or racially ambiguous media characters in the minds of audiences? Do they support post-raciality or claim a post-identity state? How is their difference established and through what identity? Exploring these questions would

help understand another shade in what Doane (2014) refers to as colorblind diversity. Moreover, fluid states of ethnoracial identity, with ties in multiple ethnic communities, could help us understand the silencing of race and ethnicity through inter-group relations (Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014; Squires, 2014).

FINAL THOUGHTS

So, what is post-racial about Millennials? Post-raciality for Millennials is largely a discursive product, mainly shaped by their apparent demographic multiculturalism. Among the many socio-cultural institutions that legitimize post-race is the media (Griffin, 2015; Squires, 2014; Wagner, 2015). Within media, entertainment television manufactures a colorblind screen (Nilsen & Turner, 2014), where various degrees of ethnic and racial diversity decorate programming – all to portray a cross-ethnoracial utopia. The presence of convergence ethnicity on television, as Brook (2009) theorizes, provides audiences with *visual* proof that race(ism) is a thing of past. In fact, many textual and ideological studies of television texts suggest the media's compliance in perpetuating a colorblind myth (Brook, 2009; Esposito, 2009; Nielsen & Turner, 2014; Squires, 2014), but we know little about how audiences negotiate and/or reject post-raciality. Qualitative audience research (Jhally & Lewis, 1992; Kretsedemas, 2014) finds that people see color on television yet prefer to focus on its meritocratic or universal appeals (Müller & Hermes, 2010). What happens, then, to the ever-present aversive images that ethnoracial groups embody in the media? How are these silenced through post-raciality, or are they?

This dissertation took a micro-level and quantitative approach in an effort to explore how the television practices of Millennials correlated with two racial ideologies: one in favor of post-raciality (namely, color-blindness) and one that counters it (that is, color-consciousness). The relationship is rather complex, and what this study finds was: (1) colorblind television content is likely to impact power-evasive over color-evasive colorblindness; (2) contrary to popular expectations, dignified representations of blacks contradict colorblind thinking; (3) ethnicity and race still accrue symbolic worth even when invisible; (4) there are shades of seeing/dismissing color, hence calling for robust and intricate conceptualizations. These observations tend to offer mixed support to the myth of a post-racial Millennial and foreground the role of television content in cultivating color cognizance. Moreover, this dissertation shows that even if content creators try to seduce Millennials with ethnoracial diversity, which paints a post-racial picture of a US society, historical and reductionist portrayals of ethnoracial minorities are hard to forget. Millennials arguably tend to resist, at least partially, the racial amnesia pushed by the post-racial mystique (see Squires, 2014).

Assuming that Millennials and others remain ethnoracially cognizant and resistant undermines the hegemonic potential of post-racial television/media as a cultural form that is never complete and always fluid. It is a highly adaptive ideological structure that seems to disappear but hides behind the acceptability and respectability of ethnoracial groups (e.g., depictions of color-blindness, meritocracy, and egalitarianism) across social-cultural domains, including popular and visual culture. The increased visibility of ethnoracial minorities (or of color) in the media appears to satisfy people's desires for

diversity and inclusion, yet questions linger about the purpose of their visibility (Beltrán, 2010b; Brooks, 2009; Bonilla-Silva & Ashe, 2014; Griffin, 2015). Is it a forced diversity? Are characters simplified complex representations, as Alsultany (2012) would argue? While textual analyses of media are useful in this endeavor, we must also examine the audience reactions to media in order to better grasp the impact of cultural production of difference. Unquestionably, they/we see *color*; its visibility is crucial to making points and support positionalities.

At the end of the day, televisibility and/or representations matter, since these are the source of pleasure and frustration for cultural readers (Bobo, 1995; hooks, 1992; Valdivia, 1998). Media is a site of cultural struggle after all, and striving for post-raciality creates tensions over how ethnicity and race should be (re)presented, in addition to what personal and/or social identities these are best handled through (Joseph, 2009; Squires, 2014). Millennials, like other social groups, must develop the cultural and symbolic literacy to make-sense of the increasing ambivalent media terrain that privileges the (White) individual over a (minority/political) collective. The development and maintenance of this cultural competence should be examined in the hopes of learning how people oppose, resist, and negotiate culture, whether mediated or not.

APPENDIX A: Color-Evasive Racial Blindness

(1 = Strongly Agree; 7 = Strongly Disagree)

1. Ethnic and cultural group categories are not very important for understanding or making decisions about people.
2. It is really not necessary to pay attention to people's racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds because it doesn't tell much about who they are.
3. At our core, all human beings are really all the same, so racial and ethnic categories do not matter.
4. Racial and ethnic group memberships do not matter very much to who we are.
5. All human beings are individuals, and therefore race and ethnicity are not important.

APPENDIX B: Color-Evasive Racial Blindness

Racial Privilege Subscale

1. White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.*
2. Ethnicity and race are very important in determining who is successful and who is not.*
3. Ethnicity and race play an important role in who gets sent to prison.*
4. Ethnicity and race play a major role in the type of social services (such as health care or day care) that people receive in the U.S.*
5. Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.*
6. Everyone who works hard, no matter what ethnicity or race they are, has an equal chance to get rich.
7. White people are more to blame for racial discrimination than racial and ethnic minorities.*

Institutional Discrimination Subscale

8. Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people.
9. White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color of their skin.

10. English should be the official language of the U.S.
11. Due to ethnic and racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality.*
12. Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as white people in the U.S.
13. It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American.
14. Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and values of the U.S.

Blatant Racial Issues subscale

15. Ethnic and racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.
16. Talking about ethnic or racial issues causes unnecessary issues.
17. Racism is a major problem in the U.S.*
18. It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities.*
19. It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.*
20. Racism may have been a problem in the past, it is not an important problem today.

*Items was reversed coded.

APPENDIX C: Ethnoracial Identity

(1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree)

Public Self-esteem

1. Overall, my ethnic or racial group is considered good by others.
2. Most people consider my ethnic or racial group, on the average, to be more ineffective than other social groups.
3. In general, others respect the ethnic and racial group that I belong to.
4. In general, others think that the ethnic and racial group I belong to is unworthy.

Importance to Identity

1. Overall, my ethnic or racial group has very little to do with how I feel about myself.*
2. The ethnic or racial group I belong to is important reflection of who I am.
3. The ethnic or racial group I belong to is unimportant to any sense of what kind of person I am.*
4. In general, belonging to my ethnic or racial group is important to my self-image.

* Item was reverse coded.

APPENDIX D: Color-Aware Racial-Consciousness

(1 = Strongly Agree; 7 = Strongly Disagree)

1. All cultures have their own distinct traditions and perspectives.
2. There are boundaries between different ethnic groups because of the differences between cultures.
3. There are differences between racial and ethnic groups, which are important to recognize.
4. Each ethnic group has its own strengths that can be identified.
5. Each racial and ethnic group has important distinguishing characteristics.

APPENDIX E: Color-Aware Racial-Consciousness

Critical Ethnoracial Reflection (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree)

1. Certain racial or ethnic groups have fewer chances to get a good high school education.
2. Certain racial or ethnic groups have fewer chances to get good jobs.
3. Certain racial or ethnic groups have fewer chances to get ahead.
4. It is a good thing that certain ethnic or racial groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.
5. It would be good if ethnic and racial groups could be equal.
6. Ethnic or racial equality should be our ideal.
7. Ethnic and racial groups should be given an equal chance in life.
8. We would have fewer problems if we treated ethnic and racial groups more equally.

Critical Ethnoracial Motivation (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree)

1. There are ways that I can contribute to my ethnic and racial community.
2. I am motivated to try to end racism and discrimination,
3. It is important to fight against social and economic inequality due to race and/or ethnicity.
4. I can make a difference in my ethnic and racial community.
5. More effort is needed to end racism and discrimination.

6. It is important to me to contribute to my ethnic and racial community.
7. In the future, I will participate in activities or groups that struggle against racism and discrimination.

Critical Ethnoracial Action (1 = All the time; 7 = Never)

1. Participated in a civil rights group or organization dealing with ethnic or racial issues.*
2. Wrote a letter to a school, community newspaper, or publication about a racial or ethnic issue.*
3. Participated in a political party, club or organization to help deal with ethnic or racial issues.*
4. Contacted a public official by phone, mail, or email to tell him or her how you felt about a ethnic or racial issue.*
5. Signed an email or written petition about a racial or ethnic issue.*
6. Joined in a protest march, political demonstration, or political meeting about ethnic or racial issues.*
7. Participated in ethnic or racial organization or group.*
8. Worked on a political campaign because of ethnic or racial issues.*
9. Participated in a discussion about a racial or ethnic issue.*

*Item was reverse coded.

APPENDIX F: Ethnoracial Identity Gratifications

We would like you think about your overall television experience. Please answer these questions about the role of ethnicity and race in your engagement with television.

(1 = Strongly Agree; 7 = Strongly Disagree)

Do you like to watch television because _____.

1. To see people from my ethnic and racial background in situations similar to mine.*
2. To see people of my own ethnic and racial background with whom I identify.*
3. It gives me factual information about my ethnicity and race.*
4. I enjoy watching people who are like me ethnically and racially.*
5. To learn about people from ethnic and cultural backgrounds different from my own.*
6. To learn more about people from my own ethnic and racial background.*
7. To find out what happens to people of my own ethnicity and race.*
8. So I can feel proud about my ethnicity and race.*

*Item was reverse coded.

Appendix G: Media and Television Literacy Levels Scale

(1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree)

1. I think media works for the benefit of some and exclude others.
2. I know the intended and resultant effect of the techniques used in media for creating emotional influences.
3. I know the characteristics of TV channels in our country and the factors determining their broadcasting policies.
4. I think special techniques are used in media for creating emotional influences.
5. I can distinguish TV shows by their objectives, functions, and characteristics.
6. I question who benefits from the media and why.
7. I think the opinions, information, and news in media are broadcasted from someone else's point-of-view.
8. I know the meanings of smart signs showing the suitability of TV programs for children and adults that are displayed just before programs.
9. I examined and evaluated the TV programs by content, reality, fictiveness, consumption, targeting, and misinformation.
10. I think television is an effective media in shaping individuals and society.
11. I search for and use other information and amusement alternative to the media.
12. I know my TV watching habits and I can control them.
13. I define the potential problems of TV broadcasts and take measures to get protected from them.

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